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The Dalai Lama's Nobel Prize reflects harshly on China.

Nobel bares China's Tibetan repression

By William Gasperini

The violent government suppression of the pro-democracy movement in Beijing this spring focused intense scrutiny on China's human rights record. Now, the awarding of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama of Tibet should increase that scrutiny on another Chinese issue long ignored by the West—Beijing's policy toward the remote mountain kingdom it has ruled with an iron fist since 1950.

The Tibetan capital of Lhasa has been under martial law since March when the army broke up protests marking the 30th anniversary of the aborted uprising that forced the Dalai Lama to flee to exile in India. Hundreds of Tibetans, mostly Buddhist monks and nuns, have been killed, arrested or imprisoned in riots that have shaken Tibet in recent years.

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"Before, the media and people in the West were skeptical of our claims of harsh repression in Tibet," said Tenzin Tethong, personal representative of the Dalai Lama in the U.S. "Now even the most skeptical of skeptics will have a hard time questioning us when they can see for themselves what the Chinese regime does to its own people."

China first invaded Tibet one year after the Communist victory in 1949, claiming Tibet had always been a part of its territory even though Tibetans speak a completely distinct language and had a wholly independent government. Throughout his people's long ordeal, the Dalai Lama has professed his commitment to non-violent resistance to Chinese control.

In a recent New York appearance he told an assembled audience, "I have come to think of non-violence and compassion not as something high and religious, but as the common connective tissue of the body of all human life." Commitment to these principles underlies the ongoing public teachings of the Tibetan leader to his Buddhist followers around the world. And it is what led the Nobel Committee in Oslo to award him the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize.

A simple Buddhist monk: Wherever he goes, the short man clad in saffron robes with an irrepressible smile seems to be a living example of compassion. In his talks the 54-year-old Tibetan leader exudes a deeply spiritual radiance, even as he displays uncanny modesty. "I am a simple Buddhist monk, nothing more," he told reporters earlier this year on a U.S. visit. Despite such selfless assertions, he is clearly something more, especially at a time when the Tibetan crisis has entered a critical phase in the wake of China's hardline crackdown on the pro-democracy movement in June.

Although the world may now become more sympathetic, Tethong and other exiled Tibetan officials feel that in the short term the incidents in Tiananmen Square may only deepen the Chinese government's resolve in Tibet. Hard-liners in the Communist Party have long blamed the "liberalization" policy pursued through much of this decade for the recent upsurge in protests, beginning with bloody riots in Lhasa in September 1987. Under that policy, China sought to rebuild some of the 6,000 Buddhist monasteries and shrines destroyed since 1959, mostly during the Cultural Revolution. Although Beijing now acknowledges that abuses occurred as fanatical Red Guards sought to exterminate Buddhism—the core of Tibetan culture—officials downplay the extent of destruction. Beijing still claims it helped develop what it considered a backward region.

Despite claims of progress, most Tibetans still live in crippling poverty. Malnutrition and illiteracy are widespread, largely because of failed attempts at forcibly collectivizing a traditionally nomadic people. These policies led to outright famine in the 1960s. More than 1 million of a total population of 6 million Tibetans are estimated to have died since the Chinese takeover, with hundreds of thousands more imprisoned.

Although Tibetans' rights are supposedly guaranteed as one of several "national minorities," critics say that Beijing has tried to co-opt the Tibetan people through forced assimilation, promoting immigration of Han Chinese into Tibet. Encouraged by higher salaries and other economic incentives, Chinese immigrants now far outnumber Tibetans in their own land, a land that has been split into several renamed provinces. China has also maintained a massive military presence in Tibet since the 1950 takeover, leading many to believe it was a strategic move to control Asia's "high ground." This process has slowly destroyed one of the world's most unique cultures, and has led international organizations including the United Nations to pass resolutions accusing China of a deliberate policy of genocide.

Tibetans consider the Dalai Lama to be a god-king, the 14th in a line of rulers stretching back centuries. He was born into a peasant family in eastern Tibet the day the 13th Dalai Lama died. At the age of two, regent monks deemed him to be the 13th Dalai Lama's reincarnation after he recognized several of the previous ruler's personal belongings.

Man without a country: Since 1959 he has headed a government-in-exile based in the northern Indian town of Dharamsala. He maintains offices in key Western cities,

including Washington and New York, to publicize the Tibetan issue—particularly human rights abuses. While many governments are sympathetic to the Tibetans' plight, no country recognizes the Dalai Lama as a head of state. Governments instead treat the Tibetan issue with extreme caution, because of China's political and economic importance. "As one-quarter of mankind, China seems to be too big and too important," Tethong said.

Until the events in Tiananmen Square, limited progress toward an understanding between Beijing and the Tibetans seemed underway. After the 1987 riots the Dalai Lama made a five-point proposal to declare Tibet a "zone of peace" and to negotiate the region's future.

In June 1988 the Tibetan leader raised the stakes with an offer to acknowledge China's claims to the mountain kingdom, allowing Beijing to oversee defense and foreign policy while granting Tibetans local autonomy. This offer, made in a speech before the European Parliament in Strasbourg, triggered dissension within the exile communities as some accused the Dalai Lama of capitulating on long-held demands for Tibet's full independence. But Chinese authorities reacted by calling even these concessions a "disguised means of achieving independence"—something they have ruled out completely. Nonetheless, Communist Party leaders agreed to meet with the Dalai Lama and said he could return home if he renounced the demand for Tibetan independence. Without warning, however, they postponed a meeting planned for January in Geneva and have set no new date or agenda.

When Chinese students called for democratic reforms this spring in Tiananmen Square, the Communist leaders' reaction was not unlike their earlier claims about the troubles in Tibet—saying "counterrevolutionaries" instigated the violence, aided and abetted by "foreign in-

INSIDE STORY

stigators." On a similar note, Hgapoi Jigme, head of the China National Peoples' Congress, recently told a local Communist Party meeting in Lhasa, "Only the Communist Party can make Tibetans masters of their land. There is no way out for the few separatists to advocate independence for Tibet and go on stirring up riots."

Widening circles: With Beijing holding firm, the Tibetans say at least they are encouraged by signs of support among exiled Chinese. In late September, Tibetan delegates attended the founding conference of the Federation for a Democratic China in Paris, a coalition of exiled leaders and intellectuals. After addressing the congress, Tethong said that for the first time Chinese nationals acknowledged that the Tibetans have legitimate claims. "Although they still don't seem to grasp the real dimensions of the problem, they say no long-term solution is possible in China itself without also addressing the Tibetan question," he said.

Meanwhile, the Dalai Lama is broadening his international contacts in search of support. In June he met with Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and later with Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, reportedly to discuss the "zone of peace" proposal. According to a close assistant, they and the president of Ireland are the only heads of state to receive the Tibetan leader officially.

For the moment, little progress seems likely until the situation within the Communist Party leadership in Beijing stabilizes. In the meantime the Dalai Lama will continue as he always has, a living symbol of peace and understanding both in Tibet and the world in general—his stature increased as a Nobel Prize winner.

"We have been invaded since 1950 and nearly extinguished as a people, and it's easy to get discouraged," he said recently. "But I have always believed in the ultimate triumph of truth. All people need non-violence and compassion, no matter what they believe. Without these things not even the slightest conflicts would ever be resolved."

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

CABLE NEWS NETWORK'S "CROSSFIRE" IS organized as a debate between liberals and conservatives, but the evening after the abortive coup in Panama, something seemed to go haywire on the show. One of the hosts and both of the guests behaved as expected, with host Michael Kinsley, an editor of *The New Republic*, and Rep. Peter Kostmayer (D-PA) opposing American military intervention, and former Reagan administration State Department official Elliott Abrams favoring it.

But the other host, pugnacious conservative columnist Patrick Buchanan, locked horns with fellow conservative Abrams rather than with the more liberal Kostmayer and Kinsley. "Our vital interests are the American personnel down there and the safe operation of the Canal, and if those two are taken care of, why do we have to go in and install the elected representative down there and risk the loss of American troops?" a skeptical Buchanan asked Abrams.

To anyone following the conservative press, however, Buchanan's response to Abrams was no surprise. For the last month, Buchanan has hotly debated Ben Wattenberg, Charles Krauthammer and other neoconservatives over what kind of post-Cold War foreign policy the U.S. should adopt. This debate is actually a continuation of an increasingly bitter conflict between "paleoconservatives" and "neoconservatives" that has wracked the conservative movement since 1981.

Democracy uber alles: The most recent round began last March when neoconservative Ben Wattenberg, a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, wrote a *Washington Times* column on what issue should replace anti-communism at the center of conservatives' foreign policy agenda. "It is time for a new bumper sticker," Wattenberg wrote. "Americans have a missionary streak, and democracy is our mission. The new sticker should read, 'pro-democracy.'"

Wattenberg then proposed an 18-fold increase in the budget of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the government agency headed by former Social Democrats U.S.A. apparatchik Carl Gershman, as well as increases in the budgets of the U.S. Information Agency and State Department. Wattenberg called on the U.S. to intervene in Third World countries to promote political democracy and free-market economics.

In a September column in the *Washington Times*, Buchanan, borrowing a phrase from former secretary of state Dean Acheson, took Wattenberg to task for "messianic globaloney." "We are not the world's policeman, nor its political tutor," Buchanan wrote. "Whence comes this arrogant claim to determine how other nations should govern themselves, or face subversion by the NED, the Comintern of the neo-cons?"

Buchanan appeared to object to Wattenberg's proposal on two grounds. He argued that with its economic problems, the U.S. didn't have the money to fund a global democratic crusade. "Democracy *uber alles* is a formula for permanent conflict and national bankruptcy," Buchanan wrote.

But echoing old-right doctrine from the '50s, if not before, Buchanan also objected to supporting democracy rather than economic liberty. "Conservatives exploded



Elliott Abrams: a neoconservative the paleoconservatives love to debunk.

Slurs fly in right's uncivil war

when Earl Warren gutted federalism to impose his one-man, one-vote dictum," Buchanan wrote. "How, then, demand that other peoples be governed by this democratist ideology?"

Buchanan took particular exception to Wattenberg's endorsement of opposition forces in Chile and South Africa. "The Boer Republic [Buchanan's quaint name for South Africa] is the only viable economy in Africa. Why are Americans collaborating in a U.N. conspiracy to ruin her with sanctions?"

Hyper-isolationists: Wattenberg and neoconservative *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer rushed to attack Buchanan in separate columns. Although failing to respond to Buchanan's charge of "imperial overreach," both Wattenberg and Krauthammer scolded him for backing South Africa, Chile and "non-democratic Moslem nations" and charged him with making common cause with the "unilateralists" and left-wing "hyper-isolationists" who had opposed the Vietnam War.

Buchanan responded by arguing that the U.S. was inexorably moving toward "unilateralism" and away from Wattenberg and Krauthammer's "internationalism." "Americans are not going to forever maintain a \$300 billion military umbrella over a Japan that steals our markets and buys our banks and industries with the profits; nor are we going to forever keep 300,000 troops in Central Europe, defending a rich continent that has been freeloading for a generation."

Buchanan was supported by *National Review* editor Joseph Sobran. Writing in the *Washington Times*, Sobran charged that Wattenberg and Krauthammer's real agenda in pressing for a democratic crusade was to maintain continued American aid to Israel. According to Sobran, the neoconservatives' "interest in world affairs often centers on Israel."

Three years ago, neoconservatives had charged that several columns Sobran had

written were anti-Semitic, including one praising a virulently anti-Semitic and racist publication, *Instauration*. By equating neoconservatives with Jews who support Israel, Sobran appeared to be walking down the same path.

Bloody outrage: In the broadest terms, the Buchanan-Sobran-Wattenberg-Krauthammer split goes back to the end of World War I, when President Woodrow Wilson tried unsuccessfully to win American support for a League of Nations. Supporters of the League argued that it would keep the world safe for democracy, while opponents charged that it would entangle the U.S. in more European wars.

League supporters, who formed organizations like the Council on Foreign Relations, became the internationalists and later Cold War liberals, while League opponents formed the backbone of the pre-World War II isolationist movement. The neoconservatives are former Cold War Democrats who backed the war in Vietnam and who began drifting away from the party after Sen. George McGovern's presidential nomination in 1972. The paleoconservatives, on the other hand, are the heirs of the Midwestern Republicans who in 1939 opposed American entry into World War II, and after the war consistently opposed foreign aid, beginning with the Marshall Plan. As the Cold War has receded, these divisions between the internationalists and isolationists have resurfaced in American politics.

The most recent split between the two factions dates from the fall of 1981, when the paleoconservatives backed Southern agrarian M.E. Bradford and the neoconservatives backed former Democrat William Bennett to head the National Endowment for the Arts. The neoconservatives waged a fierce and somewhat unfair campaign in the press against Bradford, defeating him but earning the ire of his allies. Since then, the factions have repeatedly skirmished over immigra-

tion, civil rights, trade and foreign policy.

In attacking the neoconservatives, the paleoconservatives have engaged in anti-Semitic innuendo. At a May 1986 meeting of the conservative Philadelphia Society, University of Michigan historian Stephen Tonsor read the neoconservatives out of the movement, declaring that conservatism's "world view is Roman or Anglo-Catholic," while neoconservatism represents the "instantiation of modernity among secularized Jewish intellectuals."

In October 1988, paleoconservative Russell Kirk, the author of the 1953 movement classic, *The Conservative Mind*, prompted charges of anti-Semitism when, speaking at the Heritage Foundation, he attacked the neoconservatives for their loyalty to Israel. "Not seldom it has seemed as if some eminent neo-conservatives mistook Tel Aviv for the capital of the U.S.--a position they will have difficulty in maintaining as matters drift," Kirk said.

Neoconservative Midge Decter, the director of the Committee for the Free World and the wife of *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz, denounced the speech as a "bloody outrage, a piece of anti-Semitism by Kirk that impugns the loyalty of neoconservatives. He has defined [us] as a bunch of new right Jews [and] said people like my husband and me put the interests of Israel before the interests of the U.S."

Last May the feud erupted once more when the Rockford Institute of Illinois, which publishes the paleoconservative monthly *Chronicles*, shut down and confiscated the files of the Center on Religion and Society, a New York affiliate run by Pastor John Neuhaus. Neuhaus, a close ally of the neoconservatives, had accused *Chronicles* of covert anti-Semitism and anti-immigrant nativism.

Observers from other political galaxies might wonder whether the blows between these erstwhile allies are feigned, but they need only remember the internecine rivalries in the '30s between Communists and Trotskyists or in the '60s between the Weatherman and Progressive Labor factions of Students for a Democratic Society. Just as a Communist would sooner discredit a Trotskyist initiative than overthrow the bourgeoisie, the paleoconservatives would sooner debunk Abrams or Podhoretz as defeat a liberal childcare bill or arms control proposal.

Although paleoconservatives have justly been accused of anti-Semitism, nativism and other intolerances, they are raising legitimate questions about foreign policy. Democratic liberals and moderates are split over the same range of issues, from funding for American troops in Europe and Asia to armed intervention in Panama. On Panama, for instance, while some liberals like Kostmayer questioned whether American intervention was desirable, moderate Sen. David Boren (D-OK) criticized President George Bush for not using force.

In addition, while paleoconservatives and liberals might have different reasons for taking similar positions, they both speak for a much less ideological but no less definite public sentiment in favor of paying more attention to economic problems at home. This sentiment will be an important political factor in the '90s and could transform parts of the right and left into strange bedfellows. □

IN THESE TIMES OCTOBER 18-24, 1989 3

By Joel Bleifuss

That wasn't the way it was

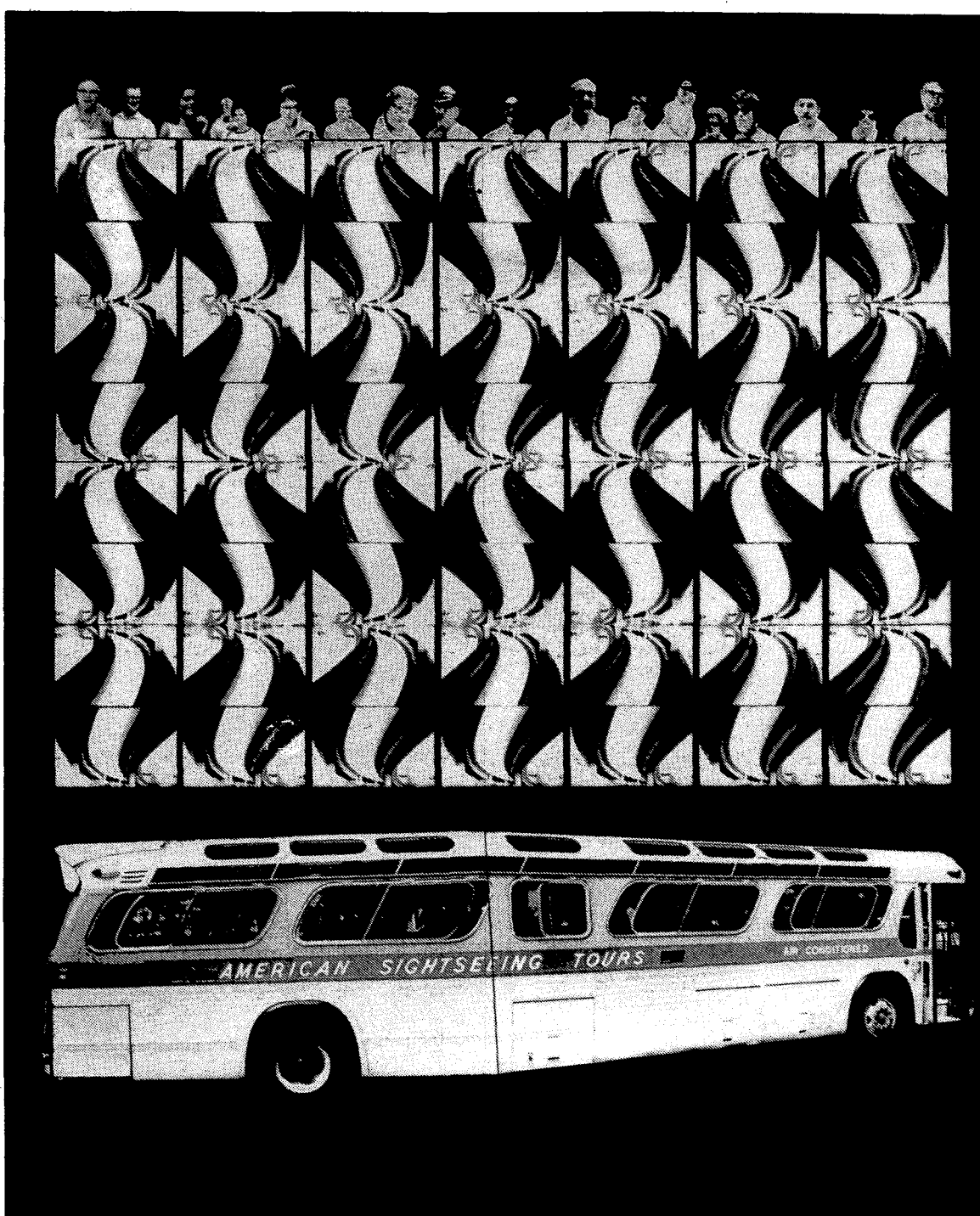
It is a scandal that is rocking the New York media world. Did CBS anchorman Dan Rather report an accurate account of the Afghan civil war? Or did he narrate a tale of Afghan freedom fighters battling the Soviet menace using film footage of staged gun battles? In at least four news reports CBS broadcast battle scenes that were not what they seemed, according to a series of reports by the *New York Post's* Janet Wilson. One example: on Aug. 11, 1987, CBS Evening News ran film of a battle that Rather characterized as "the greatest single day defeat for Soviet troops since World War II." One person who watched the report was John Simpson, the BBC's foreign news editor. He regularly screens CBS Evening News looking for material for the BBC to use and he remembers well the Aug. 11, 1987, film footage that shows Afghan rebels firing hundreds of rounds of ammunition at an alleged Soviet compound. He and the BBC's military expert went over the tape frame by frame. "It wasn't genuine," Simpson told the *Post*. "There wasn't a single dead body. If we'd seen loads and loads of Soviet bodies, we would have felt it was true. It simply had no feeling of reality.... It could have been shot anywhere. There was nothing to indicate it was actually shot in Afghanistan—absolutely nothing to back it up." But Simpson, who as a reporter has traveled to Afghanistan and covered numerous wars, never told CBS the film was fake. "It's not my place," he told the *Post*. "This was their top guy [Rather] reporting this. Besides, a lot of American TV footage is pretty questionable." CBS had obtained the film from freelance cinematographer Mike Hoover, whom *Post* sources accuse of "fobbing off staged or recreated events as actual news pictures."

FAIR game: In the wake of the *Post's* revelations, Jeff Cohen, executive director of FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), the New York-based media watch group, issued this statement: "Long ago, Dan Rather and CBS Evening News abandoned any pretense of objectivity in their coverage of the Afghan War. Rather's role appeared to be more that of a cheerleader than a journalist. Which is why analysis of the issues behind the conflict were usually secondary to the shoot-em-up war footage—a chunk of which has now been called into question." As Cohen told the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Chuck Ross, "The story here isn't one unethical cameraman, or whether the network should hire freelancers. It's that Rather and CBS threw out all sense of objectivity in their Afghan reporting. 'Gunga' Dan is what people I've talked to inside CBS were calling Rather. CBS News people believed it was his obsession."

A Soviet plot?: By and large, the establishment media is not giving much credence to the *Post's* accusations. Apparently a reporter at the *Wall Street Journal*, Mary Williams Walsh, had written a similar story about CBS's staged footage, but editors there nixed it. The *New York Times* coverage of the controversy consisted of Bill Carter's 15-paragraph story on the *Post's* allegations. Two of those paragraphs explained the charges, the other 13 explained them away. In his conclusion Carter quotes an unidentified CBS employee, who claims Rather is the victim of a "disinformation campaign" that the Soviet press agency Tass launched in August 1980.

A naked bigot

In August the Health and Human Services (HHS) Department issued a four-volume report that examined youth suicide. Among other findings, the report concludes that gay and lesbian youth may comprise up to 30 percent of the 5,000 15- to 24-year-olds who commit suicide annually. The report states, "The root problem of gay youth suicide is a society that discriminates against and stigmatizes homosexuals while failing to recognize that a substantial number of its youth has a gay or lesbian orientation." The report then calls for an "end [to] discrimination against youths on the basis of such characteristics as disability, sexual orientation and financial status." This reference to youth homosexuality infuriated Rep. William Dannemeyer, the Disneyland Republican who supports the quarantining of AIDS patients. In September he wrote President Bush, "Now is your opportunity to affirm traditional family values by denouncing the portion of the report dealing with homosexuality and [to help] those plagued by homosexuality to seek professional help to overcome their problem.... If you choose to affirm traditional family values my next suggestion would be to dismiss from public service all



Freeway mandala: Faces at the Illinois state fair, an underview shot of access ramps to Chicago's Dan Ryan expressway and a bus parked in front of the Museum of Science and Industry are the elements Chicago photographer Barbara Crane pulled together to create her 1975 collage "Bus People." Her work is on exhibit at the Catherine Edelman Gallery in Chicago.

Courtesy Catherine Edelman Gallery, Chicago

Return of the repressed traditionalists

"Together We Stand, United by Lysol" is one of the mottos of Future Housewives of America (FHA), a small group founded by two Vassar College students last spring that has, in its words, "come out of the closet ...with a mop."

The group's leaders insist that their aim is to elevate the status of homemaking to that of medicine and law, but Vassar feminists dismiss them as jokesters with misguided views of feminism. They also stand accused of sexism and homophobia.

Society's image of homemakers is "so derogatory, so negative," says Jennifer Harriton, who cofounded FHA with Regina Peters. "[Feminist groups at Vassar] shun the choice of staying home. We are a dissenting voice." As Future Housewife Peters puts it, "We're absolutely serious about removing the stigma from the word 'housewife.'" She has been pictured in the press waving a vacuum cleaner as if it were a banner.

The group, which claims 16 members, has received a cool reception at Vassar. Wendy Bethel, a member of the campus Feminist Union, attended the first FHA meeting of this academic year. There were 16 people there, says Bethel, but six or seven were feminists who "just came to see what the heck they're doing."

While Future Housewives might represent a conservative backlash among college students of the Reagan-Bush era, Vassar remains "really a liberal campus," Bethel says. "[Feminism] makes these people [in FHA] uncomfortable, makes them nervous. We are people that they want to tweak. They get so much joy out of trying to make us mad."

The slogans, as well as announced plans for Tupperware parties, a cookbook and a dating service, exist to "mock ourselves," says Harriton. "If you can't laugh at yourself...." But, says Ian Gerard, vice president of the Vassar Student Association (VSA), "They don't seem to be worried about the issues. They just want to cause a stir on campus." When Harriton and Peters asked the VSA to recognize their group as an official

campus club they received "no support," Gerard said. "Nobody really takes them seriously."

But press interest—Harriton says *Seventeen* and *Mademoiselle* magazines are planning coverage—indicates that Peters and Harriton have tapped into something. "If we really wanted to do the talk show circuit," says Harriton, "we could."

Bethel credits the college's reputation for the media success of FHA. According to her, if such a group were formed at most any other college nobody would care. "People have images of Vassar College," she says, "and this contradicts every last one of them," from its image as "a hedonistic place" during the '70s to the lingering vision of "ivory-towered little bimbos."

The FHA cofounders say the group plans to involve itself with volunteering in the Poughkeepsie community by working in a shelter for battered women and in an illiteracy program. "At this point, we're trying to get placed," says Harriton.

Although Peters and Harriton emphasized the apolitical nature of the group and its diverse membership,

they both credit an issue of the campus newspaper *Womanspeak* with spurring the formation of their group. Says Harriton "[*Womanspeak*] bashed heterosexuals. They were totally intolerant." Peters characterizes the paper as "homosexual pro-

Robert Mugabe: an Ian Smith of a different color?

HARARE, ZIMBABWE—When police arrested two left-wing student leaders in an October 4 pre-dawn raid on the University of Zimbabwe campus, they dramatically intensified an already acrimonious conflict over the increasingly capitalist tendencies of Robert Mugabe's nominally Marxist government, and that government's closely related moves to replace one of Africa's only multi-party political systems with a one-party state.

The arrests of Student Representative Council President Arthur Mutambara and Secretary General Enock Chikweche sparked an impromptu rally that soon turned violent. Rock-throwing students clashed with police firing tear gas grenades. University Vice Chancellor Walter Kamba closed the university after demonstrators set his official car, a Mercedes-Benz 230E, ablaze. It was the first time the university had shut down for political reasons since the late '60s, when it was closed by student protests against Ian Smith's white minority Rhodesian government.

On October 6, armed men showed up at the office of Zimbabwe's top trade union leader, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions Secretary

paganda." She says, a campus newspaper "promoting homosexuality bothers me personally. I don't have problems with homosexuals as individuals—just with homosexuality." Says Harriton, "We're repressed by Vassar's atmosphere. It's not like

General Morgan Tsvangirai, and took him away after he criticized the government for "the unleashing of hundreds of heavily armed riot police ... onto a young unarmed student population." Three days later, the government belatedly acknowledged that Tsvangirai had, like the students, been detained under emergency powers legislation first enacted by Smith, who ruled until 1980.

At least a dozen officials of an opposition party formed earlier this year, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), were likewise arrested in the days following the campus protest.

President Mugabe was quick to suggest that the university students had been incited by right-wing white faculty members to forsake the revolutionary ideals of the black freedom fighters who died for majority rule. Government officials hinted that students and faculty members may be given a political loyalty test before the university re-opens.

Student leaders, in a series of vituperative leaflets issued over the past year, insist they are the true revolutionaries. They have at times suggested that leaders of Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF betrayed socialism. Students have condemned the party—though not Mugabe himself—as corrupt and uninterested in the economic woes of workers and peasants. For these student radicals, the vice chancellor's Mercedes repre-

we're racist, sexist, heterosexist. We value traditional beliefs."

The group hopes to have Phyllis Schlafly speak on campus. "She doesn't speak exactly of our views," says Peters, "but she's an opposing idea."
—Josh Weiss

sented a symbol of the new elite.

Though the student leaders may face charges for attempting to hold an illegal political meeting on campus, the arrests were more likely a response to their shrill anti-government language. The students have declared that the government—which has sent police on campus several times this year to block political meetings—"displays brute neofascist [sic] comparable only to that of South Africa."

Trade unionists, church leaders and university faculty—all of whom have come vocally to the arrested students' defense—generally dismiss such rhetoric as excessive. But they echo the students' distress at conservative economic policies and restrictions on opposition political activity.

The campus closure may presage a broader political crackdown, the main target of which would likely be ZUM, an idiosyncratic opposition party whose popular leader, Edgar Tekere, has tried to use the corruption issue to win support from both right-wing white businesspeople and disgruntled black radicals—a volatile mix he hopes can provide him both popular support and campaign funding. It may be that Mugabe, fearing Tekere's formula could work, has decided now is the time to start battering the opposition.

—Steve Askin

Canada's NDP, of two minds on two tongues

Flair was something that had been noticeably lacking in the race to succeed Ed Broadbent as leader of Canada's democratic socialists. The popular Broadbent led the party for the past 15 years, but in last fall's federal election, which was won by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's ruling Conservatives, the NDP finished a disappointing third. New Democrats had been hoping at least to replace the Liberals as the official opposition party.

One by one, the party's leaders had declined to run to replace Broadbent. In their absence, five MPs and one school teacher—dubbed the "B Team" by the media and disenchanted party members—waged low-key campaigns across the country.

But these pretenders failed to light any fires either at the grass roots or with the media. Labor was especially worried because the next Liberal leader is expected to be fiery populist Jean Chretien, a long-time cabinet minister under Pierre Trudeau. As the December 3 convention date approached, NDP luminaries began to fear that the party would

get a drubbing in the next federal election, expected in 1993.

Enter Dave Barrett. No one has ever accused the outspoken Barrett, 58, of lacking flair. He is everything the other candidates aren't: charismatic, witty, well-known, a fiery speaker and experienced. He was British Columbia's premier from 1972-75, and leader of the province's NDP from 1971 to 1984. But there is one thing he is not: bilingual.

Barrett acknowledges his unilingualism is a handicap. But his very presence in the race shows he and his backers have failed to come to grips with modern Canadian reality. While he may bring excitement to the leadership race, he does not bring an understanding of how Canada has changed over the past two decades.

The 25-year constitutional and linguistic battle over the place of French-speaking Quebec in Canada has had a profound impact on Canadian politics. Being able to speak both of Canada's official languages, English and French, has become a *sine qua non* for anyone hoping to lead a major federal party. This is more true than ever in the age of TV.

The NDP has the problem of never having established a presence in Quebec. Still, it tried to overcome this handicap, knowing, as Broad-

bent put it, "The road to power in Ottawa runs through Quebec." Broadbent's efforts to improve his halting French were appreciated by Quebecers, who gave the NDP a few more votes than before but no seats in Parliament.

The NDP's disappointment was compounded by the massive support Quebecers gave to Mulroney and his U.S.-Canada free trade deal. Barrett may appeal to that disappointment. More ominously, he threatens to tap into the growing anti-Quebec backlash being felt in the rest of Canada.

Barrett's support in the party comes from the West, which has elected 30 of Canada's 40 NDP MPs and where sympathy for the French province hundreds of miles to the east has always been low. Western New Democrats argue that Barrett is the only person who can beat the Liberals' Jean Chretien at his own game and thus save the party's base in the West. It's a scenario that frightens those New Democrats who dream of a truly national party. They worry that electing a unilingual anglophone as leader would be a slap in the face to Quebec and would put an end to any hopes for a breakthrough there for the foreseeable future.

—Lawrence Kootnikoff

persons still employed who concocted this homosexual pledge of allegiance and then issue my draft executive order that would seal the lid on these misjudgments for good." "Naked bigotry" is how Urvashi Vaid, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, characterizes Dannemeyer's letter. "What we found astounding and horrifying is that he makes the argument that the lives of gay youth should be sacrificed for some argument for moral purity. He is asking the president to disregard a very important report simply because sections of it deal with gay and lesbian youth. Dannemeyer is making a career on his campaign against gay people. What we need desperately is people in Congress to stand up and say this is bigotry, this is crazy."

Mikhail's man in Berlin

Intelligence Newsletter of Paris reports some political observers think that the ailing East German leader Erich Honecker may be replaced by Markus Wolf, the former head of the East German internal security agency Stasi. Wolf is currently out of favor due to his openly pro-*glasnost* attitude. His candidacy would have the advantage of being backed by Mikhail Gorbachov, the Soviet KGB, and the friends and resources he acquired during his long tenure as head of internal security.

Video workers of the world unite

The internationalization of computer and telecommunication networks may in the 21st Century force the U.S. labor movement to rethink its position on international unionism. *Futurist* magazine predicts the coming of an electronic imperialism and a new type of global worker, "the electronic immigrant." Joseph Pelton writes, "This new worker will telecommute to work over great distances.... People in the relatively cheaper labor markets will be recruited and trained to perform a variety of services that can be performed remotely, such as computer programming, word processing or telephone sales ... If the electronic-immigrant trend continues unchecked, we could see the creation of 'telecolonies,' whose local finances and politics are largely controlled from an overseas capital."

The Reagan-Bush difference

In a short time the '80s will be history. *People* magazine is marking that passing with a special issue titled "The '80s—Go for it! From greed to *glasnost*, brash was beautiful and the only sin was not to win." A section of the magazine called "What a difference a decade makes" provides some facts and figures that chronicle how we changed in the '80s. Those were boom years for some. The people who profit off the military industrial complex saw the annual defense budget increase from \$134 billion in 1980 to \$298.3 billion in 1989. Of course, they were bust years for others. In 1980 the number of Americans locked up in prisons stood at 329,821. By 1988 it had jumped to 627,402. But hey, we are now more beautiful. In 1981, 380,400 people opted for cosmetic surgery. By 1988, 681,070 Americans were cut and tucked. Not everyone could afford to greet the '90s with a new face. In 1980 those whose only sin was not to win—in other words, those living below the poverty line—numbered 29.2 million. By 1987 another 3.3 million had joined their ranks. But there were some winners—and those who won, won big. In 1980, 4,114 Americans "earned" an annual adjusted gross income of \$1 million or more. In 1986 they numbered 35,875.

Ethics in the '80s

Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA) has a lot to say about other people's ethics. But judging from a 1986 letter he wrote to then National Security Adviser John Poindexter, this Georgia salamander has scant regard for the tenets of open and democratic government. Advocating that the U.S. should fight communism with a worldwide series of contra-like wars, Gingrich wrote, in part, "Our goal with the public at large must be for the absence of disapproval, rather than for approval.... The American people are by nature not inclined to seek out conflict, and not inclined to meddle in other people's affairs. If we ask for their positive approval, we will never get it. We must simply ask for the benefit of the doubt. We must keep the risks low enough and the investments small enough so that people will tolerate it.... There is a fundamental difference between gaining public approval for our efforts, which is very difficult, and avoiding public disapproval, which is much easier."



Wilbur Jones of Cincinnati (center) at the October 7 Housing Now! pre-march rally on the Washington Monument grounds.

By Doug Turetsky

FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS EARLENE SCALES HAS lived in a shelter for homeless women in Homestead, Pa. Holding two dog-eared letters from doctors, she recounts the serious illness that led her first into the hospital and eventually into homelessness. Standing on the Mall in Washington, D.C., on October 7, Scales looks up from the letters and surveys the thousands of people who have come to de-

mand that the federal government increase its funding for housing. "I feel good that people are caring," she says.

Robin Townes, a 29-year-old homeless woman with two young children, agrees. For the past seven months she and her family have lived in the Madison Hotel, a welfare hotel in New York City. She looks across the Mall, where a sea of demonstrators stretches from the Capitol to the Washington Monument, and comments, "It warms my heart, but it also saddens me because it is such a nationwide problem."

From the nation's inner cities to its rural hamlets, rising homelessness and the growing need for affordable housing is gaining public attention. The Housing Now! march, which drew more than 100,000 people from across the country, would have been unlikely to gain such support only a few years ago.

March organizers, led by homeless advocate Mitch Snyder, Barry Zigas of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Rev. Joseph Lowery of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Louisa Stark of the National Coalition for the Homeless garnered widespread endorsements for the

Marchers demonstrate depth of housing crisis

event. They were joined at the October 7 rally by supporters ranging from Mayor Raymond Flynn of Boston to Hollywood stars Valerie Harper and Jon Voight to Rev. Jesse Jackson. A special children's march proceeded to the Capitol steps, where some 65 little red wagons laden with letters requesting aid for the homeless were presented to House Speaker Thomas Foley (D-WA). Labor unions, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Organization for Women were among the more than 200 na-

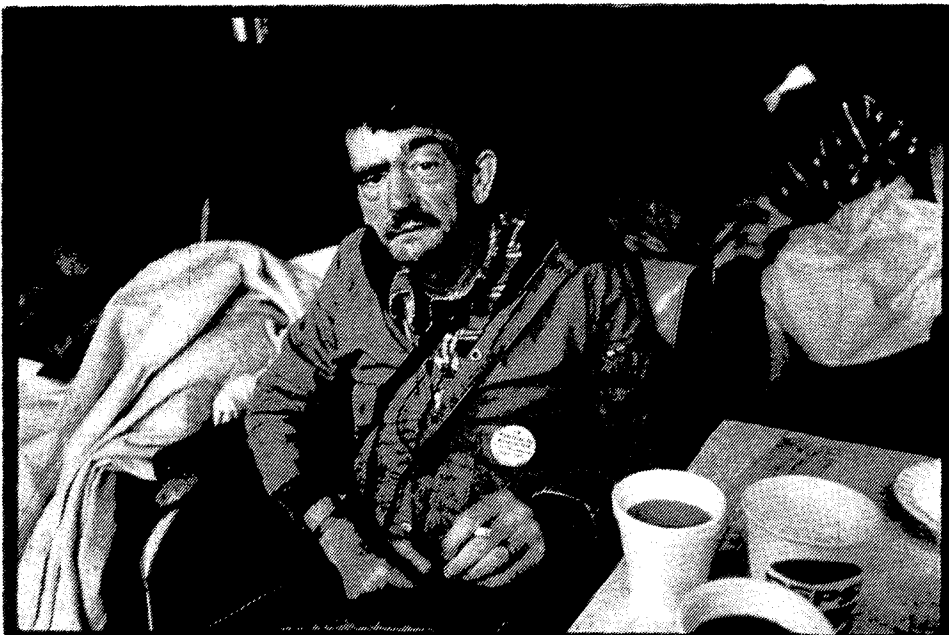
tional groups that endorsed the march. With estimates of 350,000 to 3 million people homeless in the U.S. and hundreds of thousands more living doubled and tripled up in overcrowded apartments, the housing crisis has literally thrust itself onto the nation's doorstep.

Nowhere to go: The marked growth of the twin crises of homelessness and lack of affordable housing can be traced to the precipitous drop in new federal funding of housing programs during the Reagan years—

from \$32 billion in 1978 to \$8 billion 10 years later. But federal housing funds have always been inadequate, says Cushing Dolbeare, a housing policy analyst. "Even if we had kept the level of the Ford administration, which is the highest it has ever been, we'd still have a terrible problem," she says.

Although President George Bush has denied the connection, homelessness is directly related to the diminishing availability of affordable housing. In fact, families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. According to the National Low Income Housing Information Service (LIHIS), at least one-third of all renter households in the U.S. cannot afford the average cost of a one-bedroom apartment in their home state (using the federal yardstick of spending up to 30 percent of income on rent as the measure of affordability). In six states—Maine, Nevada, Rhode Island, Vermont, California and Massachusetts—a one-bedroom apartment is unaffordable to more than half the renter households. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children grant for a three-person family doesn't cover the cost of the average two-bedroom apartment in 42 states.

As poverty has grown in the U.S., the number of low-cost apartments has shrunk. Figures compiled by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Census Bureau, and analyzed by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and LIHIS, illustrate the problem's staggering dimensions. In 1970 there were 9.7 million apartments renting for \$250, which is affordable, using the 30 percent yardstick, to households with annual incomes of \$10,000. By 1985 the number of apartments renting for \$250 had dropped to 7.9 million, while the number of renter households earning \$10,000 or less annually had swelled to 11.6



A homeless man waits for medicine. Due to lack of medical services, many marchers fell ill.

million. The net result: 5.8 million renter households pay more than 30 percent of their incomes for rent. Three million U.S. households spend at least 70 percent of their incomes on rent and utilities.

But many housing experts question the 30 percent measure, charging that the yardstick unduly burdens the poor. Even if a household

Some argue that the deficit precludes any large funding increase for low-income housing. But one speaker noted that Congress has found \$150 billion for the savings and loan bailout.

earning \$10,000 is lucky enough to find an apartment renting for only \$250, that leaves just \$7,000 for such necessities as food, clothing and medical expenses. Although wealthier households have fueled the luxury condominium boom, they generally spend a significantly smaller percentage of their incomes on housing than do the poor. For example, households with incomes between \$40,000 and \$60,000 spend, on the average, just 14 percent of that for housing.

Despite such facts, federal housing assistance remains far more generous to the well-off. Much political hay was made of Congress' \$700 million increase in last year's housing budget. But that figure pales in relation to the extent of federal assistance to homeowners. Cushing Dolbeare estimates that in the coming fiscal year, income tax deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes will save homeowners approximately \$54 billion.

Many, including legislators on Capitol Hill, argue that the federal budget deficit precludes any large increase in federal funding for low-income housing. But Gov. Richard Celeste (D-OH), who spoke at the Housing Now! demonstration, noted that Congress has recently been able to find more than \$150 billion for the savings and loan bailout, as well as \$1 billion to aid the victims of Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina.

Start making sense: Even among those who are well—and affordably—housed, there's a growing awareness that federal

Continued on page 22



A sea of demonstrators stretches to the Washington Monument.

New York's massive outlay just a drop in bucket

In neighborhoods like Harlem and the South Bronx, some of the poorest in New York, renovation of rows of abandoned and dilapidated buildings has reached a feverish pace. Under a \$5.1 billion program first announced three years ago by Mayor Edward Koch, the city is using an unprecedented amount of its own funds to build and rehabilitate housing.

A recent study by the New School for Social Research puts the size of the city's funding commitment in national perspective. Last year New York spent \$740 million for housing, more than three times the amount spent by the next 50 largest cities combined. By contrast, Los Angeles spent \$50 million and Chicago just \$2 million.

Despite its comparatively enormous expenditure, New York remains a long way from successfully dealing with its homeless crisis and immense shortage of affordable

housing. Before leaving to take a job with the Trump Organization several years ago, former New York Housing Commissioner Anthony Gliedman said it would take an immediate infusion of \$20 billion to solve the city's housing crisis and then cost \$2 billion a year just to keep it from sliding back into a crisis situation.

But it's not a shortage of funds that draws criticism to the mayor's 10-year housing plan, which mayoral candidates David Dinkins and Rudolph Giuliani say they would continue. It's the way funds are used that rankles many activists, and has led to a lawsuit filed in state Supreme Court by the Housing Justice Campaign to halt the program.

A recent report by Philip Weitzman, a former city assistant commissioner for policy analysis and research, notes that the 660,000 New York households in need

of assistance have a median income of just \$8,000. Yet little of the housing being built under the 10-year plan will be affordable to these households. A study by the Association for Neighborhood Housing and Development (ANHD) has found that in addition to the 15,000 apartments being built for the homeless (activists estimate there are 70,000 homeless in the city), just 87 units will be affordable for families earning \$10,000 or less a year. In fact, of the nearly 84,000 units scheduled to be built, roughly 40 percent will be for families the city defines as middle-income.

Although the city repeatedly proclaims that most of the money allocated for the 10-year plan will be spent on housing for low- and moderate-income families, much of that funding will go to renovate already-occupied apartments owned by the city. As housing advocates point out, the city is taking credit for doing what is

required of any other landlord—maintaining and improving their property.

Housing activists such as Bonnie Brower of ANHD charge that the 10-year plan is really a blueprint for gentrification and displacement in many lower-income neighborhoods. They point to schemes like the one proposed for the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area on the Lower East Side, where the city will subsidize the Lefrak Organization's plan for 400 luxury condos, 640 middle-income apartments and a smattering of lower-income units.

Much of the city's housing plan apparently rests on trickle-down theory: as housing opportunities are opened for middle-income New Yorkers, relatively affordable apartments will become available for lower-income families. There's scant evidence that this occurs. Unless it retargets its funds to help those most in need, the city will fail to strike at the heart of its homeless crisis.

—D.T.



Virginia Lt. Gov. L. Douglas Wilder's conciliatory style has helped him become the early favorite in the state's gubernatorial race.

Black politicians seek broader base by dropping confrontational style

By Salim Muwakkil

FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS, BLOC VOTING ALONG racial lines has been the dominant strategy in the struggle for black political empowerment. Because that struggle was widely perceived as an extension of the civil rights movement, African-Americans used many of the movement's tactics to reap long-denied political benefits.

But as the 1990s approach it seems clear that a tactical shift is under way; coalition politics are replacing the politics of racial solidarity. Black politicians are adopting conciliatory styles that contrast starkly with the confrontational stances of their political predecessors. Nowhere is that change more evident than in the upcoming races in Virginia and New York City, where two black candidates are trying to make political history.

Crossover politics: In Virginia, Lt. Gov. L. Douglas Wilder is the Democratic candidate in the November 7 gubernatorial race. Wilder already has earned a number of political firsts in his home state. In 1969 he became the first elected black state senator since Reconstruction. He became the state's first black lieutenant governor in 1985 with nearly 52 percent of the vote. If he wins this year Wilder will be the first black elected governor in U.S. history. P.B.S. Pinchback, the only previous African-American governor, was appointed to his Louisiana post in 1873 and served for only 43 days.

Wilder, an attorney, exemplifies the kind of "crossover" politics more black office-

seekers are adopting. He is a political moderate who eschews race-based appeals and keeps Jesse Jackson at arm's length. Current polls show Wilder with a slight lead over his Republican opponent, former Virginia Attorney General J. Marshall Coleman. African-Americans make up about 20 percent of the state's electorate, and most analysts predict they will vote overwhelmingly for Wilder.

David Dinkins won the New York City Democratic mayoral primary by polling more than 90 percent of the black vote and nearly 30 percent of the white vote. Pundits estimate he needs about 35 percent of the white vote on November 7 to beat Republican mayoral candidate Rudolph Giuliani.

Further black electoral gains can be made only by attracting more white voters.

While Dinkins' political philosophy is considerably to the left of Wilder's, his style is similarly conciliatory. And while both men find it prudent to forego appeals to racial solidarity, both will undoubtedly benefit from it.

The emergence and growing prominence of this new political style stems in part from a growing realization among African-Americans that further electoral gains can be made only by attracting more white voters. In con-

gressional politics, for example, black representatives now serve in 20 of the 21 House districts in which a majority of the population is African-American. The only predominantly black district without black representation is Louisiana's 2nd District, a New Orleans-based area now represented by 73-year-old Democratic Rep. Lindy Boggs, who is expected to retire soon. Another exception is the Texas seat left vacant by the August death of Democratic Rep. Mickey Leland. Most analysts predict Leland's seat in Texas' 18th District will easily be filled by another black representative.

But prospects are few after that. Whites historically have been reluctant to vote for black candidates, and except for California Democrat Ronald Dellums and Missouri Democrat Alan Wheat, no black representative currently serves a U.S. House district with a white plurality. To make matters worse, the upcoming redistricting efforts that will follow the 1990 census portend further political erosion for black elected officials.

Redistricting losses: According to a forecast by Election Data Service, a Washington, D.C.-based political consulting firm that specializes in redistricting, Northeastern and Midwestern states are projected to lose up to 16 congressional seats through reapportionment after the 1990 census. What's more, population changes will shift political power from urban and rural areas to suburbs, from the Democrats to the Republicans, and from some predominantly black districts to white-controlled districts. A study by the Atlanta-

based research group Southern Regional Council found the districts losing the most population are those represented by members of Congress who consistently support progressive issues.

Analysts at the Joint Center for Political Studies (JCPS), a think tank specializing in black issues, contend that redistricting could erode the political base of several black members of Congress. An article in the August issue of the JCPS magazine *Focus* noted

POLITICS

that many districts currently represented by blacks have experienced population drains "which could lead to their boundaries being radically redrawn or to the districts' being eliminated altogether.

"That is why many minority organizations are pressing for greater accuracy in the census and are preparing strategies to counterbalance an expected undercount." Of particular interest, the article added, were districts in "New York, Illinois and Michigan, which have two or more black congressmen and which are projected to lose two or three seats each in the coming reapportionment."

Black vs. black: This changing demographic landscape is the major reason black politicians are changing their mode of operation. But changes are afoot even in districts where blacks are in the majority. In Cleveland, for example, two veteran black politicians defeated three white candidates to win the top two spots in the mayoral primary and now must face each other in the November 7 general election. City Council President George Forbes will face Ohio state Sen. Michael White in an historic black vs. black election. Since the black solidarity issue is moot in this contest, the two candidates must address issues that attract more white voters.

Even Maynard Jackson, who easily regained his old job in the Atlanta October 3 mayoral election, has mellowed considerably. As the city's first black mayor in 1973, Jackson adopted a highly confrontational posture, but in his return to the post he too talks of conciliation. His immediate predecessor this time around, Andrew Young, long a proponent of this conciliatory style, is now setting his sights on the Georgia state house.

While this new era of black politics is led most prominently by high-profile pols like Wilder, Young and Dinkins, it is practiced most consistently by elected officials on the state and local levels. The leading practitioners include Alex Williams, the state's attorney of Maryland's Prince George's County; Roland Burris, the comptroller of Illinois; Richard Austin, the secretary of state of Michigan; Ike Leggett of Maryland's Montgomery County Council; and Kurt Schmoke, the Rhodes-scholar mayor of Baltimore. Another black Rhodes scholar, Mel Reynolds, is challenging Gus Savage—a master of the confrontational style—for his Illinois congressional seat.

"When you look at the new wave in black politics, you find a more pragmatic, battle-trained political animal coming along," said Eddie Williams, president of JCPS. "These black people come from a much stronger education and career background. They are ready and they are able to appeal to voters across racial lines. They understand how to work the political system—getting slated, cutting deals. They understand that just saying, 'I'm black and I'm proud, vote for me because I'm black,' isn't going to cut it anymore."

Nuisance case grows into constitutional fight

By Florence Hamlish Levinsohn

NEXT WEEK THE WASHINGTON STATE SUPREME COURT is scheduled to hear oral arguments in what has been dubbed "The Freeway Hall Case." It will review what five years ago appeared to be a nuisance case, but has evolved into a First Amendment test case that will be argued before the court by civil liberties attorney Leonard Boudin.

The Freeway Hall Case began in 1984 in Seattle when Richard Snedigar, a former member of the tiny 100-member Freedom Socialist Party, sued FSP leaders for the return of a \$22,500 donation made five years earlier for the purchase of a new party headquarters. As an enthusiastic member of the FSP, which is headquartered in Seattle, Snedigar took a second mortgage on his house to help finance the headquarters purchase after the party had received an eviction notice. His roomers, also party members, agreed to increase their rent payments to help pay off the mortgage. But Snedigar's enthusiasm for socialist revolution waned and he left the party in 1980, apparently with no animus. Meanwhile, the party managed to get several extensions on its lease as it searched for several years for a suitable headquarters. Snedigar's money sat in the bank awaiting the purchase of the new building.

Change of heart: Suddenly, Snedigar declared that the FSP had defrauded him and sued for the return of his money, plus interest and penalties. He started complaining to the FSP about being "bilked" shortly after the successful outcome of a suit against the city by one FSP founder, Clara Fraser, in which she won a \$135,000 judgment to compensate for her discriminatory firing in 1975. Fraser is one of nine defendants in the case. Snedigar's lawyers requested that she open her financial records in an unsubtle attempt to have her repay him from her award money. Snedigar charged FSP leaders with fraud, undue influence, breach of contract, unjust enrichment, abuse of trust and violation of the charitable solicitation laws.

What had originally appeared to be a nuisance case that Snedigar couldn't win because he admitted that he had freely contributed the money, shortly turned into a full-blown First Amendment case. In May 1985, allegedly to determine the merits of the case, Judge Arthur Piehler ruled that the FSP turn over to the court all its membership and supporter lists, eight years of meeting minutes and organization financial information.

Thus arose a cause célèbre. The FSP refused, on constitutional grounds, and in September of that year won a reversal of the order by the Appeals Court with the help of the National Lawyers Guild and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Then, the next month, still another judge, to get around the Appeals Court decision, ordered the FSP to turn over its records to Snedigar or to a judge for *in camera* review. The FSP went back to the Appeals Court and also to the State Supreme Court. This time more than 50 organizations signed an amicus brief. Review was nevertheless denied and, in May 1987, the judge, now the fourth on the case in two years, found the defendants in default after they refused to cooperate with the order, and summarily awarded

Snedigar a \$44,000 judgment without a trial.

There was a surreal air in the proceedings. Questioning the basis on which Judge Warren Chan signed the ruling for a judgment, the defense attorney asked, "Was fraud and misrepresentation one of the bases on which you ruled?" The judge replied, "It may have been, but you see, it's for the appellate court to see the facts and determine, regardless of whatever the reason the trial court uses. If for any other reason, the judgment may stand, the rule on appeal is that it will stand ... so this court doesn't have to specify every ground." He complained several times about the case's "mountain of paper." But, having signed the judgment, Judge Chan withheld filing it until the Appeals Court decided whether it would review the constitutional issues.

Immediately, the FSP went back to the Appeals Court. Fraser submitted an affidavit that outlined, based on her nearly 50 years in the socialist movement, what the disclosures of party information could mean to those involved and to the health of the party, recalling "excruciating betrayals by long-

time associates who, under pressure, informed to ... investigative committees that rampant from the late '40s into the '60s."

In February 1989 the Appeals Court found that the default judgment was too harsh and needed to be reconsidered, but upheld the order to disclose the party's lists and minutes. The FSP then went to the State Supreme Court. Seventy organizations and individuals—including the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Organization of Women and the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee—signed an amicus brief prepared by the National Lawyers Guild.

Another threat: Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court recently decided to let stand a lower court ruling that found for a woman who had sued for the return of the millions of dollars she had contributed to the Bible Speaks Church in Lenox, Mass. She charged that she had been unduly influenced. Snedigar is also claiming undue influence in his suit against the FSP, though he did admit in

testimony that he gave the money freely at the time. The FSP is claiming that he volunteered the money, but that might not wash with the new precedent established by the U.S. Supreme Court.

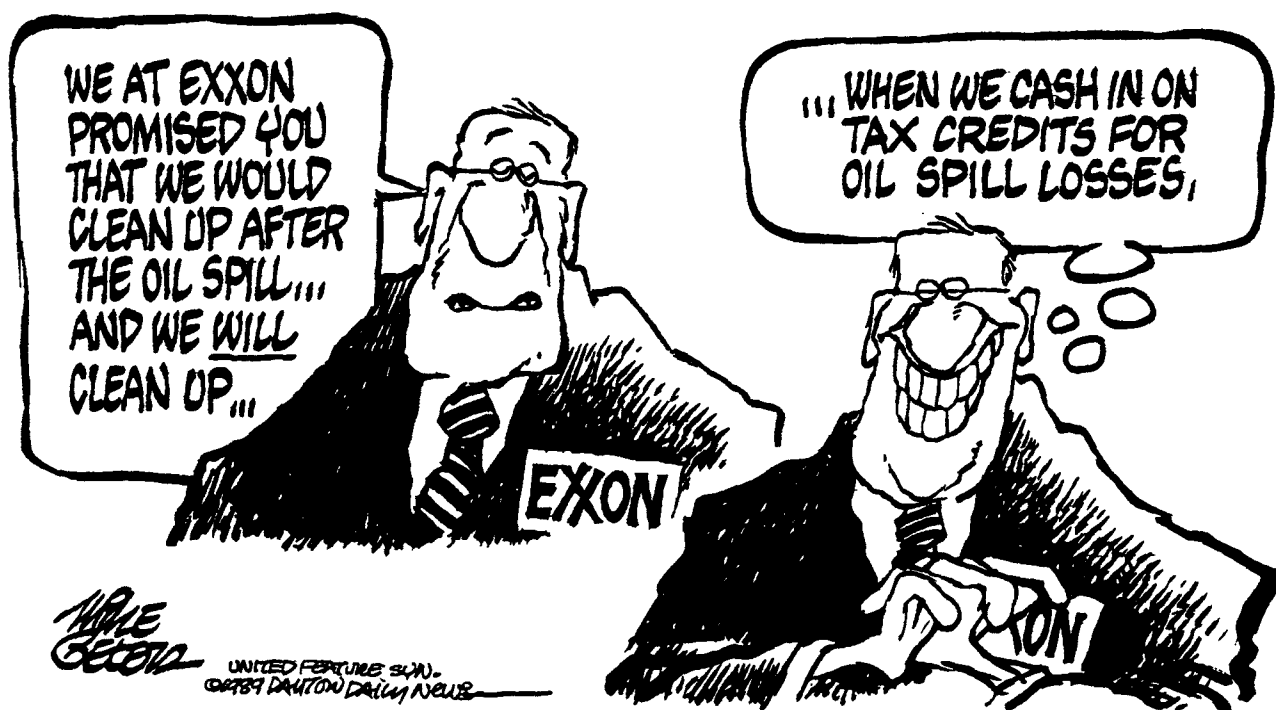
The issue of undue influence is not the one before the Washington Supreme Court at this time. That case involves only the First Amendment issues of disclosure. But when the full case comes to trial, Snedigar's attorney might well use the precedent of the Bible

FIRST AMENDMENT

Speaks case. The implications of this case extend not only to churches but to all voluntary organizations that rely on contributions. The decision favoring the church member in Lenox effectively destroyed a 1,400-member church. Rev. George Robertson, administrator of Greater Grace Church World Outreach in Baltimore, was quoted in the October 6 issue of the *Chicago Tribune* as saying, "Virtually anywhere in this country now, the door is open to anyone who gives money to any church, or any cause ... even the Boy Scouts ... to say they were unduly influenced and demand their money back."

Florence Hamlish Levinsohn is a former managing editor of *In These Times*.

Legislators wrestle with liability for big oil spills



By James M. Haddad

IN MAY OF 1989, SHORTLY AFTER THE EXXON VALDEZ spill, the Bush administration announced its first official response to the disaster, not emergency cleanup funds but a legislative proposal to protect Exxon from future lawsuits for pollution liability. The administration proposed capping liability at \$78 million and establishing a cleanup superfund of \$500 million that "dramatically enhances our ability to compensate victims of major oil spills and to restore our fragile environment," said Transportation Secretary Samuel K. Skinner. But does it really? An important legislative fight with wide-ranging ramifications for the future of the industry has developed in response. Both sides claim to be the environmental proponents.

Late this month the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on a bill (HR 1465) designed to establish a federal standard for assigning pollution liability and providing a fund of \$1.3 billion for quicker, surer pay-

ment for claimants. But it would also limit a polluter's liability to only \$95 million, while pre-empting a state's right to sue for full damages arising from a spill. Critics say the cleanup fund is not enough, pointing out that Exxon has already paid \$2 billion. They also believe the liability cap is too low, because

ENVIRONMENT

a big spill on either coast could cause damages far in excess of the \$95 million limit. In addition, they say the provisions that would pre-empt states that hold spillers liable are too lenient. The House bill is based on the administration proposal, which, in turn, was based on earlier bills that never passed.

The Senate, on the other hand, unanimously passed companion legislation in August (S 686) that is similar in most respects, except it would not pre-empt state laws that allow for unlimited liability.

A group of representatives led by Gerry Studds (D-MA) and George Miller (D-CA) will

present amendments to HR 1465 in an attempt to eliminate the state pre-emptions and otherwise firm up the bill. The stakes are high, and whatever the vote's outcome, the issue of pre-emption promises to persist. Curiously, the battle has not been widely reported except in insurance and industry trade publications.

The bill came out of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee chaired by Walter B. Jones (D-SC). Various House committees have proposed this type of bill for each of the past 14 years, but each time objections to pre-emption of the state laws blocked the bill's passage. But after the Valdez spill, the committee beefed up and expedited their bill and re-proposed it.

Tough bill: The bill would establish a \$1.3 billion-per-incident oil industry-financed fund to pay for cleanups and to compensate those affected by a spill. The fund would respond immediately to federal and state cleanup costs and pay for damages where

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the source of a spill is unknown, or if claims exceed an innocent spiller's liability as established in the bill. This would ensure that funds are immediately available, sidestepping the damaged party's need to prove negligence before obtaining cleanup funds.

It would also establish a uniform liability law to replace the current state and federal patchwork. For tankers, liability would be \$1,000 per gross ton to a maximum of \$95 million. However, in cases of gross negligence, the spiller would be responsible for all cleanup and damages, while in the event of "acts of God" or similar perils the spiller would not have to pay. In addition, the bill would provide for the implementation of international protocols regarding the liability of seagoing tankers, once these treaties are ratified by the Senate. To comply with these treaties, liability would have to be capped and conflicting state laws pre-empted.

The bill also calls for investigations and research into preparedness and tanker safety, task forces to fight spills, firmer licensing and enforcement and so on. It is a tough bill that goes a long way in providing for funds for accidents caused by both U.S. and foreign parties. And to their credit, Jones and the committee presciently raised serious concerns about emergency preparedness, vessel suitability and the liability question just weeks before the *Valdez* ran aground.

Jones' committee and the administration argue in favor of pre-emption because without it the protocols for international recovery of damages cannot be implemented. Therefore, they believe their bill is more environmentally sound. Curiously, this is one instance where the administration is content to let international protocols dictate domestic policy rather than the other way around.

But environmentalists say the bill is not

enough, largely because of the liability cap that they believe lets spillers off the hook. It certainly is conceivable that a spill could cause damages in excess of \$95 million. *Valdez* probably did. Tankers carrying 11 million gallons or more regularly ply the waters of New York and Long Beach, Calif. (although none the size of *Valdez*, which only lost one-fifth its cargo). According to the Washington, D.C.-based Oceanic Institute, the area covered by the *Valdez* spill is equivalent to the Atlantic coastline from New Hampshire to North Carolina.

According to a September 14 letter to Congress signed by 100 environmental groups, the House proposals "favor oil company and shipping interests" by limiting liability and undermining states' ability to protect their citizens and property. Seventeen states currently hold polluters fully liable without limits.

Either way, both houses of Congress are

expected to pass some type of comprehensive oil-spill bill. No one knows if the administration will veto a bill lacking pre-emption. If a law is enacted without pre-emption, then something will have to be done to deal with foreign polluters. The effects of the issues being debated will be far-ranging, but public debate is sparse.

The insurance industry has not absented itself. It is lobbying for the cap. By fixing liability, insurers can provide capacity to insure the risks. (No insurer will accept unlimited liability.) They note that a similar limit, \$7.5 billion, was approved in 1988 for pollution liability arising from nuclear reactors (the Price-Anderson Act). Environmentalists counter that this is simply an argument against the nuclear cap. If industry can obtain full insurance for its potential liabilities, then this translates into a fixed cost in premium each year, ultimately passed on to the consumer. In other words, the risk and cost of a catastrophe are transferred to the public.

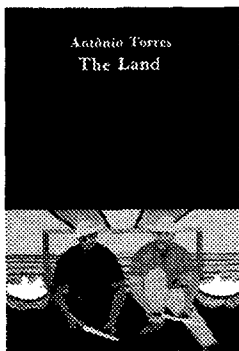
This raises other social questions that Congress has not even begun to address. By grossly underestimating pollution's potential costs, is the price of energy kept artificially low? For example, should the potential social costs be factored into the price of a kilowatt? Solar and other clean-energy proponents argue that we currently are ignoring the costs of oil and nuclear power. Sooner or later, they say, Americans will have to pay up for pollution.

What, after all, is the cost of oil and nuclear energy each year in terms of lung cancer, leukemia, skin cancer, dead fish and so on? If oil liability limits are capped, we may never find out—until it is too late.

James M. Haddad is a New York-based freelance writer.

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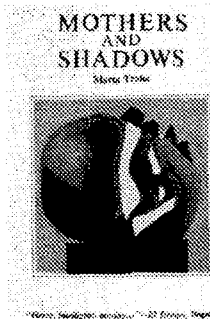
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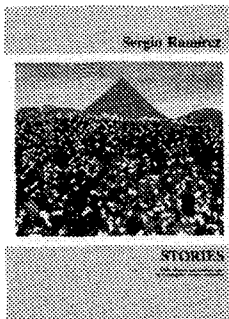
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Can Democrat win race without vow to veto tax?

By Paul Bass

NEW HAVEN, CONN.

HE'S NOT NECESSARILY FOR IT. HE'S NOT necessarily against it. If it works, he's for it. If it doesn't work, he's against it. Bruce Morrison was trying to answer a question, a question reporters kept rephrasing: Do you support a state income tax in Connecticut? Reporters wanted a simple answer. Morrison wanted space for a complicated answer to what he considers a complicated issue.

Morrison, a four-term Democratic U.S. representative, had called a press conference to announce he'd formed a committee to explore a run for governor. The questions confirmed recent poll findings that Connecticut's voters are fed up with the state's inequitable, unpredictable tax system. Along with drugs, the income tax promises to be the top issue Morrison faces when he formally launches his uphill, year-long campaign within the next few weeks.

In a state with the country's highest per capita income and three of its poorest cities, the income tax question is a loaded one. Everybody wants to reform a system reliant on a regressive 8 percent sales tax. Yet conventional wisdom holds that voters statewide aren't ready to embrace a progressive income tax that, unlike the sales tax, draws proportionately more of its revenue from the wealthy than from the poor. So all successful statewide candidates have flatly opposed the idea.

Given Morrison's liberal reputation in Congress, reporters were waiting to see how he'd tackle the income tax issue. He wouldn't flatly rule it out, nor would he simply embrace it. He wasn't dodging the question, he insisted, but was trying to redefine debate on the major issue in Connecticut politics—at the same time that he seeks to redefine state politics itself. In that sense, Morrison's delicate dancing on the tax issue mirrors his unconventional, longshot approach to running for governor against a powerful 10-year incumbent from his own party. His campaign promises to test the proposition that one can advance a progressive agenda through a campaign aiming for middle-of-the-road voters, a strategy Democrats have been looking for nationally in order to reclaim the White House.

Return to the outside: The race represents Morrison's return to the outsider, grass-roots politics that led *In These Times* to begin tracking his career in 1982. That year, Morrison, then a legal-aid lawyer without electoral experience, was one of several Democrats ushered into Congress by two forces: the Reagan recession and a coalition of labor, peace and black activists. That coalition helped Morrison come from behind in the Democratic primary to defeat a candidate backed by the party machine, then beat a Republican incumbent in the general election.

Since then, like many members of the "Permanent Congress," Morrison has become entrenched, a fund-raising powerhouse. He's developed a paunch from the endless rubber-chicken dinners required in working the district. Gray has crept into his mustache.

In the last two elections, he had only token opposition; he scared away most serious Re-

publican contenders with his lock on PAC money and broad-based local support. It took Morrison only two years to bring most local developers and businesspeople, including conservative ones, to his side. Though they disagreed with his views on national and international issues, they found him "a good listener" who fought hard for grants to his district, including federal Urban Development Action Grants that put dollars in some of their pockets. He stayed out of most local political fights in order to main-

POLITICS

tain good relations with the machine. (He even refused to back liberal former Rep. Toby Moffett's gubernatorial bid four years ago—a campaign similar to Morrison's current one.)

By making a national name for himself as an unrepentant left Democrat on issues like contra aid, the nuclear freeze, the Grenada invasion, affordable housing and the HUD scandal, Morrison retained the loyal support of his original base. Now, for the first time since 1982, he needs that base again, because he can't count on the big guns.

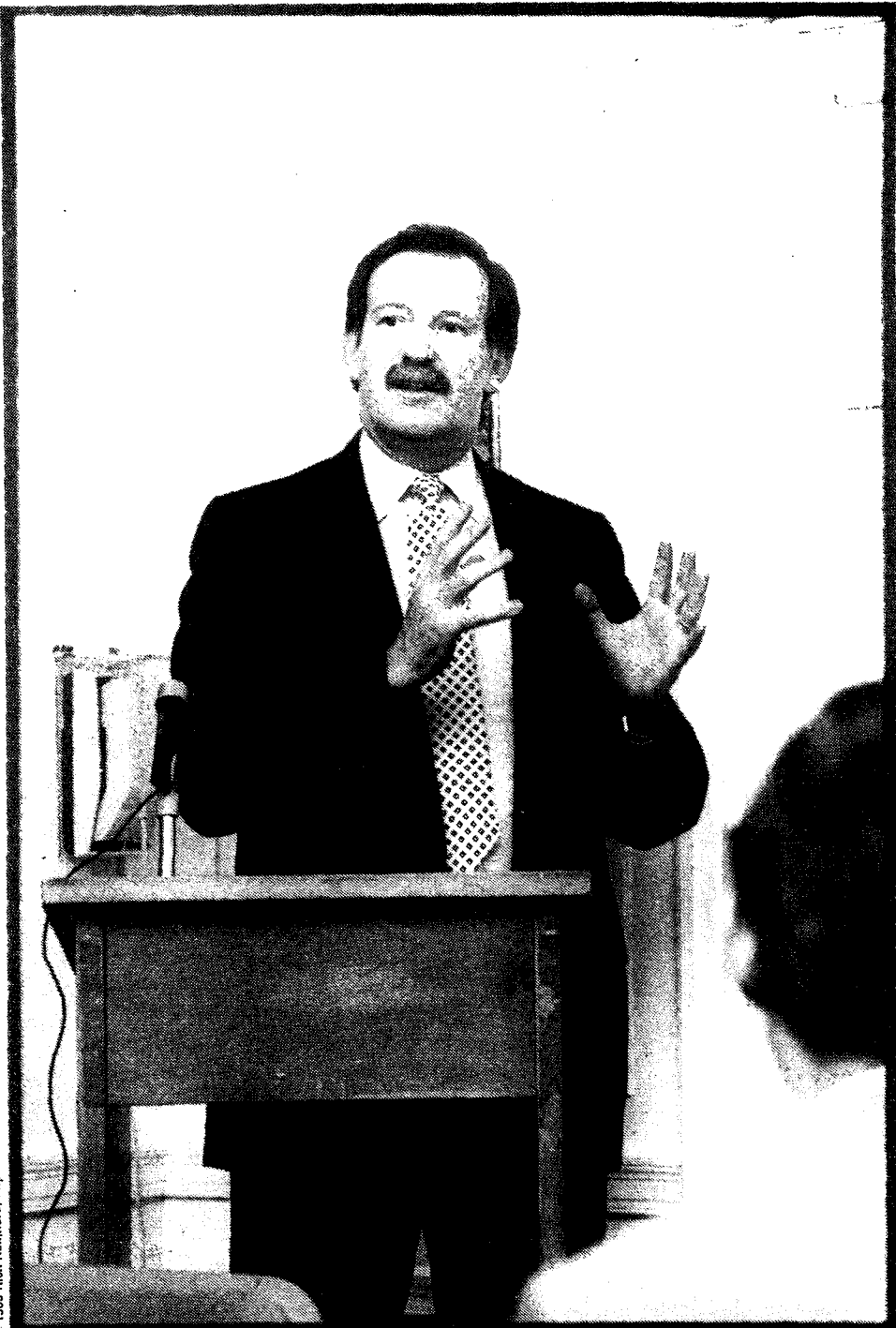
His conservative Democratic Party opponent, incumbent Gov. Bill O'Neill, is unpopular because of high taxes and a general neglect of social problems. But he has built up an awesome patronage and fund-raising machine during his 10 years in office. He crushed Moffett's bid four years ago by leaning heavily on local politicians to deny Moffett enough delegates at a state party convention to qualify for a primary. O'Neill has already begun, a year away from the 1990 primary, to press Connecticut politicians for early endorsements. Local officials fear cutbacks in state aid and contractors fear losing state business if they don't back O'Neill.

Even if O'Neill decides not to run again, he can hand his campaign chest to his Democratic heir apparent, popular middle-of-the-road U.S. Rep. Barbara Kennelly. Even if Morrison wins the primary, he faces a tough Republican opponent in conservative U.S. Rep. John Rowland.

So Morrison is banking on his reputation, his grass-roots base and changing times in Connecticut. For instance, he bucked the party machine recently to support a black candidate in New Haven's mayoral primary; there, as in several other Connecticut cities last month, anti-machine candidates won ringing victories that have thrown a once-invincible party organization into virtual disarray. At a raucous victory celebration, the mayoral candidate's backers chanted "Bruce, Bruce, Bruce," marking his gubernatorial campaign as their next crusade. And Morrison is banking on his ability to buck that great static political force that *Newsweek* dubs "the CW," or conventional wisdom.

Tale of two states: The conventional wisdom holds that you can't win a statewide election without promising, as O'Neill has, to veto an income tax. Connecticut's General Assembly passed an income tax close to 20 years ago, then was forced by the public outcry to repeal it before it even went into effect.

Even income tax opponents acknowledge that times may be changing. A few corporate leaders have begun speaking out in favor of



Bruce Morrison: banking on his grass-roots base as he bucks conventional wisdom.

an income tax, belying the argument that instituting one would discourage companies from moving here; especially in the cities, businesspeople believe declining schools and sky-high housing prices have become the chief obstacles. During this last legislative session the middle-of-the-road speaker of the house, Democratic State Rep. Richard Balducci, called the eventual passage of an income tax inevitable. In a closed-door caucus, 46 of 88 state House Democrats said they'd support an income tax bill, even though their governor had vowed to veto it. Given Republican opposition, that wasn't enough to pass

Morrison's run for governor in Connecticut attempts to advance a progressive agenda by aiming for middle-of-the-road voters, a strategy Democrats have been looking for on a national level in order to reclaim the White House.

a bill, but it represented a major step forward. Part of that advance can be explained by the emergence of LEAP, the Legislative Electoral Action Program, a left-leaning coalition of citizen-action and social-change groups that helped elect 35 of its 42 endorsed candidates to the legislature this session.

And the newspaper that led the campaign to repeal the income tax 20 years ago, the *New Haven Register*, earlier this year launched a crusade for an income tax. The paper noted that homelessness, public education, AIDS and infant mortality crises have spun out of control in Hartford, the country's fourth-poorest city, and New Haven, the seventh-poorest. Meanwhile, amid federal budget cutbacks, the state government, dominated by some of the country's wealthiest suburbs, has left the cities to rely on exorbitant property taxes to address their social problems; employers and middle-class families have fled the cities partly because of those taxes. The state government itself, in order to balance its books and avoid the income tax issue, increased the sales tax last session, expanded its state lottery program and added a hodgepodge of other taxes that disproportionately affect the poor and middle class.

Despite these signs of growing support, even proponents of a progressive income tax, such as LEAP-endorsed Democratic State Rep. Miles Rapoport, acknowledge that the climate probably hasn't changed enough to enable a politician to win the entire state

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JUDGING FROM WHAT ONE HEARS IN Washington these days, there are two theories as to why people use drugs. One is the Republican theory, advanced most vehemently by drug czar William Bennett, that people indulge in heroin, cocaine and the like because law and order has broken down, and families, churches and schools are disintegrating. The other is the Democratic theory, which holds that people do drugs because they're poor, downtrodden and longing for escape. "Up with hope, down with dope," says Jesse Jackson, appearing to imply that once social conditions are ameliorated, the drug problem will vanish like a puff of smoke.

But rarely are things so simple. While racism and poverty help explain why some Americans resort to ultra-potent substances like crack, they're hardly the whole story. Throughout history people have resorted to various mind-altering substances, from beer to peyote, for reasons that are as varied as human experience itself. They've taken drugs to get closer to God or to heighten their experiences here on Earth; to sharpen their senses or anesthetize their brains; to blend in with the crowd or to distinguish themselves from the pack.

During the '20s, middle-class kids drank bathtub gin to show their contempt for the repressive, puritanical America of Calvin Coolidge. Forty years later, they demonstrated revulsion for American consumerism by turning their nose up at booze and puffing away happily on pot. In the '70s, yuppies snorted coke because it seemed to go with the quickening pace on Wall Street, while, more recently, aspiring arbitrageurs have downed gallons of black coffee in imitation of caffeine-junkie Ivan Boesky.

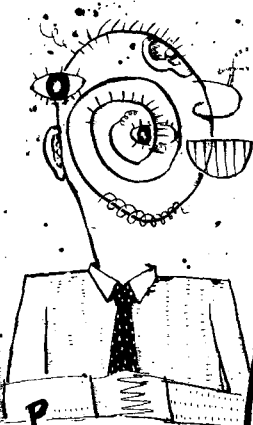
Thus, the question of intoxication turns out to be as complex as sex, death, money or other fundamental aspects of the human condition. One generation's meat quite frequently turns out to be another's poison. The only constant is that most people do something to alter their conscious state. While Mormons eschew all mind-altering substances right down to coffee, tea and chocolate, they and people like them are a distinct minority.

What's your drug? In fact, all of us may be hooked in one way or another, teetotalers included, whether we know it or not. Since the '70s, medical researchers have zeroed in on a group of internally generated mood-control agents known as endogenous morphines, or endorphins, that are believed to play a key role in determining whether we're anxious or relaxed, unable to concentrate or immersed in thought. Ironically, endorphins are chemically related to forbidden exogenous opiates, such as opium, morphine and heroin, and produce a similar psychological state—a sense of bliss, floating and transcendence of ego.

For centuries, people who have spoken of "losing" themselves in their work, of shutting out the world while they concentrate on an intellectual problem, may actually have been describing a heightened mental state brought on by an internally generated drug. They may not be so much devoted to their profession as devoted to a chemical high that scientists now believe may be brought on by hard work or vigorous physical exercise.

Committed joggers, of course, are so devoted to their daily "runner's high" that many injure themselves through over-training. When ordered by a doctor to stop, they may often display such classic symptoms of

By Daniel Lazare



withdrawal as irritability, nervousness and loss of concentration.

When doctors speak of being addicted to their work, according to *Messengers of Paradise: Opiates and the Brain*, an interesting new book by Charles F. Levinthal, they may mean it quite literally. One surgeon interviewed as part of a 1975 study said operating was "like taking narcotics." Another compared it to heroin. A third confessed that he never felt under more stress than when he was vacationing with his family in the Bahamas. A fourth said he was so nervous after two days of sight-seeing in Mexico—the first vacation for him and his wife in years—that he volunteered his services to a local hospital and spent the rest of his vacation in surgery.

Surgeons are not the only ones who describe work in such terms. A world-class chess master quoted by Levinthal said that whenever he sits down to a game, "Time passes a hundred times faster ... it resembles a dream state. A whole story can unfold in sec-

onds, it seems." In his 1934 novel, *The Search*, C.P. Snow described the ecstasy of scientific discovery in terms bordering on the hallucinatory: "It was as though I had looked for a truth outside myself, and finding it had become for a moment a part of the truth I sought; as though all the world, the atoms and the stars, were wonderfully clear and close to me, and I to them..." This may have been literary hyperbole—or an accurate description of a scientist who has made the breakthrough of a lifetime and is soaring on opiates as a result.

Whatever their political or moral value, hard work and self-discipline may also be routes to self-medication. Similarly, those dependent on outside sources to satisfy their opiate craving may never have learned to generate their own. Conventional solutions to the "problem" of addiction frequently make it worse. By throwing exogenous-opiate junkies in jail or depriving them of employment—one goal of militant organizations like Partnership for a Drug-Free America—

they likely will remain locked in their exogenous addiction and will never be able to produce their own drugs in ways that society deems legitimate.

Alcohol: Another High. If opiates, internal or external, are the most common mind-altering substances, then alcohol is a close second. We celebrate anniversaries with champagne, the end of the work day with beer and a good meal with wine. In 1984, the French government estimated that a third of the electorate derived all or part of its income from the production or sale of alcoholic beverages, while in Italy a few years later an estimated 10 percent of arable land was said to be given over to viticulture.

According to archeologists, beer-making is as old as agriculture; in neolithic times, it was probably the only method of preserving the nutritive value of grain. Since then, alcohol has been brewed from just about every conceivable fruit or vegetable—mead from honey, sake from rice, wine from palm, mezcal and Central American pulque from agave

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DRUGS'R'US

and cactus. North American Indians even made a liquor from maple syrup, while South American Indians made one from various jungle fruits.

According to the Book of Genesis, grape wine was discovered by Noah, who promptly got drunk and threw off all his clothes, presumably in celebration. Approximately 1,000 years later, the Book of Proverbs advised: "Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; let them drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more"—a reminder that seeking escape from oppressive social conditions through intoxication is not necessarily a cardinal sin.

Why is alcohol so popular? For one thing, users have learned to savor the taste of beer, wine, cognac, eau de vie and so on that goes with inebriation. For another, it is a source of nutrients, goes well with food and, as a common agricultural byproduct, is all but unavoidable in a wide range of cultures. It is also a highly sociable drug that a vast range of societies have used to bring people together to laugh, talk, sing, dance and worship (e.g. the Passover seder, in which inebriation is a *mitzvah* or commandment).

Finally, alcohol has the advantage of being highly modulatory. Whether at a party or dinner, experienced users know how much to drink in order to attain an appropriate level of intoxication. They may happily gulp down one and another, but then wait until their mind has settled a bit before venturing on to a third. At a business gathering, they may decide not to drink at all.

Of course, alcohol has its dark side—18 million problem drinkers in the U.S. alone, 23,000 alcohol-related traffic deaths per year, tens of thousands of work-related injuries—but it also has benefits that are frequently overlooked. While everyone knows of marriages destroyed by alcohol, how about the marriages it helps save? Who speaks up for the worker who, after a hard day, fortifies him or herself with a drink or two before facing up to the rigors at home?

Whereas feudal peasants worked to exhaustion and then, on feast days, drank to collapse, industrial man uses alcohol in smaller amounts to fine-tune the means of production—himself. After working eight hours, he uses it as a reward and relaxant. Would the same worker be more productive if he didn't settle himself down with a beer, but instead fidgeted nervously in front of the TV or yelled at the kids? Perhaps. But considering that periods of peak economic growth have sometimes coincided with periods of peak alcohol consumption (e.g. the U.S. in the '50s), the answer, very possibly, is that productivity would not be enhanced.

By the same token, despite a pronounced shift since the '70s from hard liquor to white wine, low-alcohol beer and the ubiquitous Perrier-with-a-twist, industrial productivity has been stagnant. Americans are drinking less, but not working better as a result.

Dying for a smoke: Then there is nicotine, a mood-control agent whose popularity worldwide is only slightly less than that of alcohol. Beginning in 1493, when Columbus returned from the New World with an interesting new plant called tobacco, nicotine's progress has, until recent years, been unchecked. Users were executed in 17th-Century Russia, while Bavaria, Saxony and Zurich decreed bans. Whenever Sultan Murad IV traveled around the Ottoman Empire during this period, he delighted in executing his subjects for the heinous offense of lighting up. "Even on the battlefield ... he would punish them by beheading, hanging, quartering or crushing their hands or feet," according to one account.

Nevertheless, the popular will has prevailed. When the director-general of New Amsterdam tried to impose a smoking ban in 1639, virtually the entire male population camped outside his office in protest. While fond of wine, Thomas Jefferson inveighed against tobacco (which he called "productive of infinite wretchedness"), yet after the revolution it emerged as a major cash crop.

Besides being useful as a fumigant, nicotine has a mild calming effect that can be used to promote sociability, which is why it quickly became a fixture in coffee houses and taverns. Rip Van Winkle, everybody's favorite peaceful layabout, was, according to his creator, Washington Irving, never to be seen without his hunting rifle, his dog and his pipe. Gen. Douglas MacArthur smoked a cornob pipe, a homely touch that was immediately picked up by the press, while college men in the '50s favored briars because it gave them the firm-jawed look appropriate to the American Century.

Since then, however, nicotine in general, and cigarettes in particular, have been under sustained assault. Smokers nowadays are segregated in restaurants, barred from lighting up on airplanes, shunned by co-workers and harassed by friends. Yuppies pollute the air with their BMWs, but nonetheless are aghast at the thought of soiling their lungs with so much as a whiff of someone else's "sidestream" smoke. Yet, in a certain roundabout sense, we owe a debt of gratitude to nicotine for helping to show how to run a proper anti-drug campaign. Smokers are en-

For centuries, people who have spoken of losing themselves in their work or shutting out the world may have been describing an elevated state brought on by an internally generated drug.

couraged by an array of government subsidies, but millions of nicotine addicts have been persuaded to quit through means that stop somewhat short of driving them into the arms of Uzi-toting drug dealers.

Rather than driving users underground, the anti-smoking forces have mounted a nonstop propaganda campaign that has proved devastatingly effective simply because it is true. Outside the tobacco lobby, few people doubt that cigarettes cause lung cancer and are a prime contributor to heart and respiratory diseases causing hundreds of thousands of deaths in the U.S. each year. The credible campaign appeals to people's self-interest, rather than bludgeoning them into obedience.

Meanwhile, amid all the hysteria over crack, no one seems to notice the growing amount of tobacco advertising pitched directly at the inner-urban market. Faced with declining sales, cigarette manufacturers have tried to recoup by appealing to blacks and Hispanics, a strategy as devastating in terms of health and mortality as the efforts of the Medellin and Cali cartels. Yet if affluence and education rise, it seems reasonable to presume that nicotine addiction will decline in these areas as well.

Reefer madness: On the other hand, probably no drug has been the subject of more lies than marijuana. The 1936 propaganda film *Reefer Madness* is valuable both as a camp classic and a window onto the obsessions of a middle-class society then terrified of sex, jazz and "letting go." Although American society seemed to be coming to its senses in the '70s, when marijuana came within a hair's breadth of decriminalization, it has since beaten a hasty retreat behind a curtain of disinformation and lies.

Due to the war on drugs, marijuana is back as an official "gateway" drug leading inexorably, according to official dogma, to cocaine, heroin and a lifetime of addiction. Yet millions of students have used marijuana since the '60s with no noticeable ill-effect. Millions of adults with kids, jobs and mortgages relax occasionally with a joint without winding up in the gutter. But simple facts like these mean little to a Republican-Democratic establishment hopelessly hooked on rhetoric and revenge.

The curious thing about marijuana, though, is that just as its evils have been vastly inflated by the government, its virtues have probably been exaggerated by supporters as well. In Holland, where marijuana is decriminalized, surveys indicate that a smaller percentage of people smoke than in the U.S. In India and the Caribbean, where marijuana is ubiquitous, those with the economic means prefer booze. Steve Hagar, editor of *High Times* magazine, the pot-smoker's bible, tells of an American traveler who, when offered palm wine in an African village, asked for some potent local herb instead. The villagers were puzzled: why would anyone prefer something as lowly as

marijuana to a delicacy like palm wine?

Why indeed? If drug prohibition were lifted, marijuana would undoubtedly find a niche in American society, but probably not much more. Laborers, taxi drivers and construction workers might find it useful in relieving boredom, but others might find that its hypnotic quality makes them feel groggy. Some might prefer it on weekends, while others might find that its effects are not very sociable. It makes many people quiet and withdrawn, which is why the noise level at a party usually drops whenever joints begin circulating. People opposed to noisy parties on principle might appreciate marijuana for precisely that reason. But judging from the experience in Holland, where marijuana is neither stigmatized by the government nor glamorized by the underground, a majority, arguably, would not.

Just say yes: Given the multiplicity of drugs and uses, what is one to make of a slogan like "Just Say No," endorsed by nearly the entire political spectrum, from Jesse Jackson to Jesse Helms? What's most apparent about the slogan is its arbitrariness. It does not ask Americans to forego all mind-altering substances, obviously, since drugs like caffeine, nicotine or highly addictive valium are still freely available.

It does not ask them to steer clear of only the most dangerous since, in terms of sheer bodies, alcohol and nicotine kill approximately 150 Americans for every one who succumbs to the effects of heroin, coke or other prohibited substances. (According to the National Council on Alcoholism, alcohol and tobacco were implicated in more than half a million deaths in 1985, while illicit substances were found to be factors in only 3,562.) Banning one without the other is like banning deer rifles while permitting sales of automatic weapons to go forward unimpeded.

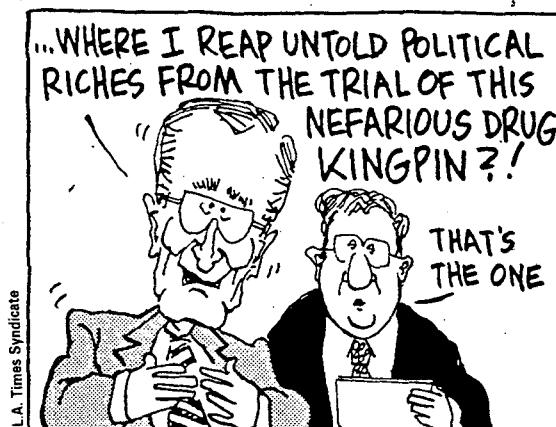
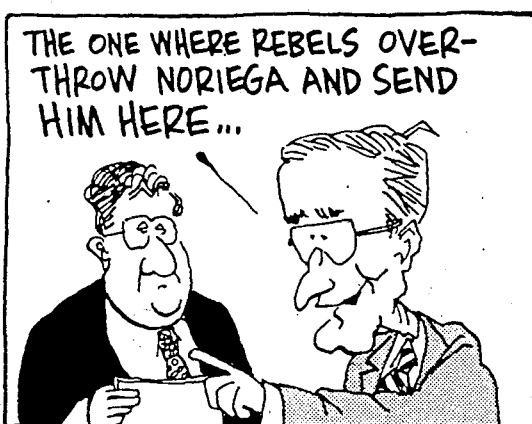
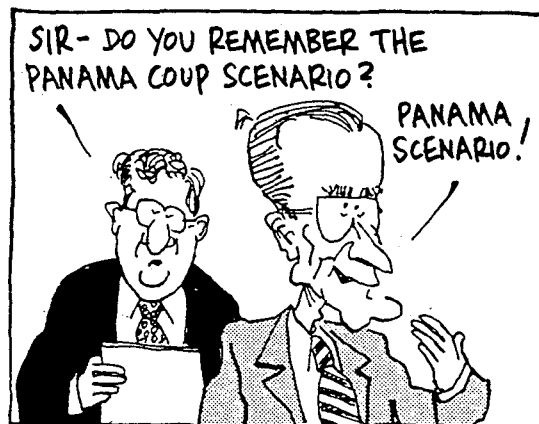
Rather, the purpose of the "Just Say No" campaign is to shore up political authority. Using the circular logic favored by authoritarian governments, the campaign asks Americans to forego those substances that have been prohibited not for reasons of health but for reasons of custom and politics. It urges them to just say no for no other reason than that their leaders have just said no.

The results may be unreasonable, but that's exactly the point. Right-wing authoritarianism is, in the final analysis, irrationality by decree. Those on top seek to limit debate not because it's disruptive but because it may lead to something more intelligent and democratic, and thereby upset their rule. Similarly, if drug czar William Bennett succeeds in enforcing unthinking drug obedience, he and other conservative hard-liners no doubt will try to achieve it in other areas as well, such as abortion rights, collective bargaining, race relations and foreign policy.

The goal is mass cerebral anesthetization, more complete than that achieved by any drug. □

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EDITORIAL



Cautious coup makers create dead giveaway in Panama

After months of encouraging Panamanian officers to attempt a coup against General Manuel Antonio Noriega, President Bush got his wish when a hapless major—now dead—took his suggestion and stormed the dictator's headquarters. Not surprisingly, Major Moises Giroldi Vega expected some help from the Americans, but aside from two roadblocks—set up so as to avoid a technical violation of the Panama Canal treaties—help was not on the way. So the coup failed, and Bush immediately announced that the administration had had nothing to do with it.

Bush's denial was, of course, a dead giveaway. No one believed it, and only a day or two later administration spokesmen were falling over themselves telling about their discussions with Giroldi before

the coup attempt and about their plans to seize Noriega if there were an opportunity to do so "without open military involvement." That opportunity never came, they explained, because the coup collapsed before the plan could be executed. Administration caution, in turn, led to furious denunciations in Congress by guardians of the world's morality who were outraged that American troops didn't just go in and remove the bastard who has so tarnished the macho image of American imperial power. And, of course, the media followed suit, bemoaning the lost opportunity and the probability that this flub gave Noriega a new lease.

Now don't get us wrong, we don't like Noriega any more than Bush does—although in Bush's case it's that he doesn't like Noriega anymore. We never did like Noriega, but Bush liked him fine until he joined Ferdinand Marcos in the ranks of formerly useful dictators who have ceased serving their purpose. Yet even though we don't like Noriega, we never thought it was our business to overthrow him. We have that old-fashioned idea that it's the Panamanian people's place to do that, just as the Philippine people did with Marcos. It makes more sense, has more to do with democracy and doesn't make a mockery of national sovereignty and colonial independence.

It isn't class warfare—it's the wimp factor

For months the House Democratic leadership and the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee backed and filled in the face of a strong wind from the White House in favor of a capital gains tax cut. During all this time the leaders never challenged President Bush's assertion that a reduction in this tax would stimulate investment by encouraging wealthy property owners to sell long-term assets, and that the volume of these sales would increase revenues despite the lower tax rate. While House Speaker Tom Foley waffled, wimped and worried, Republicans pushed for this gift to their sponsors and won to their side enough Southern Democrats and West Coast timber industry representatives to carry the day in the Ways and Means Committee by a 19-to-17 vote.

Only then did House leaders come to life. They came up with an alternative plan of their own: a tax increase from 28 to 33 percent on the 600,000 wealthiest Americans and expanded deductions on Individual Retirement Accounts for middle-income taxpayers. Foley put the full weight of the leadership genteelly behind it, but as one deserting Democrat said, his efforts were "too little and too late." On the House floor, the capital gains tax cut won easily as 64 Democrats voted for it and only one Republican voted against it.

Is there a lesson here? The media seems to think so, but it's not the obvious one of Democratic indecision and fear of offending funders. To the *New York Times*, for example, the Democrats' political weakness stemmed from their reliance on "class warfare" rhetoric, not indecision or timidity. Approvingly quoting Rep. Mickey Edwards

(R-OK) to the effect that Democrats were "campaigning to an America that existed 40 years ago," the *Times* took the opportunity to ridicule House Majority Leader Richard A. Gephardt for his message that "pitted the limousine set against the middle class, the 'super-rich' against the first-time home buyer." Gephardt did point out the class bias in Bush's proposal, but as he also insisted, his criticism "came out of the truth of the matter." While some of the president's wealthy contributors are rewarded with ambassadorships, Gephardt said earlier, "the rest are being taken care of by this capital gains proposal." And that is in fact the bottom line.

The current 28 percent tax on capital gains for the wealthy was the price they were asked to pay for having their income tax rate reduced from 50 percent to 28 percent in the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Even with the increase in the capital gains tax from its previous high of 20 percent, those with annual incomes of more than \$200,000 were the biggest gainers. And now they want to have their cake and eat it by having capital gains cut below the pre-1986 level. This, of course, would reduce federal tax revenues after a year or two of joyous trading of assets by the wealthy and would result either in even more cuts of vital social services or increased excise taxes on working people.

As we've pointed out before, there is no evidence that the American people support this tax giveaway—quite the opposite. In fact, recent polls show that a large majority understand that the wealthy are undertaxed, and support increased taxes for them. The problem here is not with the message but with the medium. What's needed is a strengthening of the House leadership's resolve, which can only come from a strong message from constituents. Fortunately, the issue is still before Congress and will not be resolved for many weeks. There is still time to defeat Bush's plan.

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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LETTERS

Optimism

JAMES PETRAS (ITT, SEPT. 20) BUILDS A CONVINCING case for the rising tide of U.S. hegemony in the face of a Soviet retreat from international affairs. Nevertheless, I retain the hope that he has somehow missed the point. In taking what is clearly the humanitarian road, Gorbachov has left the U.S. conspicuously alone on its pedestal as world cop. Is it not conceivable that the slack in the Soviet rope so eagerly being taken up by Washington may prove to be just enough for the U.S. administration to hang itself?

Jeff Creque
Bolinis, Calif.

Loose lips

PERMIT ME A FOOTNOTE TO RICK KISSEI'S COMMENTS (Letters, Sept. 27).

Politics aside, Michael Harrington could be very loose with his polemical language. He participated in a *Partisan Review* symposium on my book *The Roots of the Modern American Empire*. In the course of his remarks he called me a Leninist, one of his favorite terms of dismissal. Now anybody who knows me, or has seriously read my work, knows that if you want to stick me in a category, then I am politically a socialist in the tradition of G.D.H. Cole: decentralized, grass-roots socialism. It may be romantic, but it sure as hell isn't Leninism.

I wrote Harrington about this but never received an answer. Of course, my letter may have been lost in the mail.

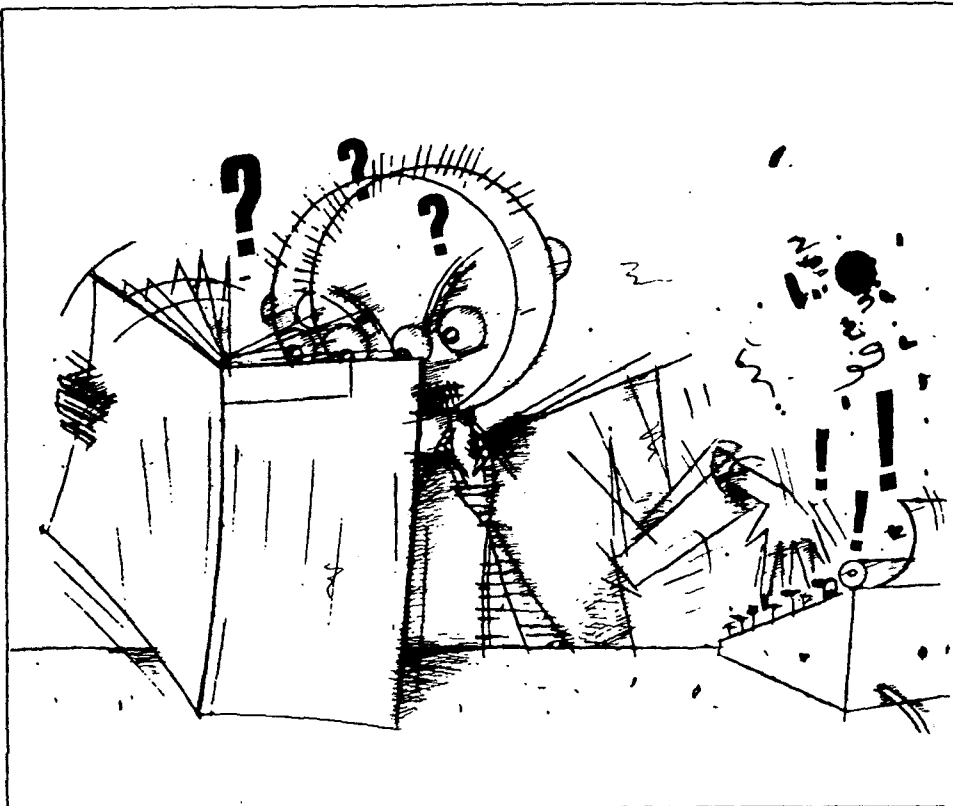
William Appleman Williams
Waldport, Ore.

Labor's tactics

AS A PERSON WHO SPENDS EVERY DAY "IN THE TRENCHES" of labor-management litigation, I have enjoyed reading David Moberg's article on labor law reform (ITT, Aug. 30) and Staughton Lynd's response.

Moberg is exactly right when he says that labor laws in general, and the National Labor Relations Board in particular, are increasingly seen as adversaries by the union movement. This is particularly true in the area of limitations on strike activities. My clients regularly tell me, when I am forced to advise them that various tactics they wish to use are unlawful, that there is no such thing as an effective strike that does not, in some way, violate the law.

Moberg's proposal to trade off the mandatory dues check-off in exchange for the right to engage in unlimited secondary boycotts is indeed intriguing. I agree that the secondary boycott is essential to an effective strike; the ban on such activities is based on the fiction that there are "neutrals" in a labor dispute. However, if the unions are to be asked to give up the dues check-off, I would also suggest overturning several recent Supreme Court cases through legislation giving unions more latitude to spend dues money in areas not related to contract enforcement, as well as more authority to discipline members and to control internal activities. In recent years, the National Right-to-Work movement has succeeded in convincing the Supreme Court to place many constraints on the ability of unions to operate effectively. If union membership becomes entirely voluntary, there should be no need for laws telling unions how to spend dues money, or preventing unions



from disciplining members who resign from membership and cross picket lines in the middle of a strike.

With regard to Lynd's proposal to do away with "no-strike" clauses, the problem I see with this is that such clauses are historically the "quid pro quo" for grievance and arbitration mechanisms. The grievance process is often the arena where unions are most effective, particularly in the area of preventing employers from engaging in precipitous and unfair disciplinary actions. Can unions afford to file lawsuits or engage in economic action every time an employee is unjustly discharged?

I would not think so. If the connection between "no-strike" clauses and the grievance-arbitration mechanism can be undone in negotiations, I would be sympathetic to Lynd's approach. However, in the real world of labor negotiations such contracts would in my opinion be very difficult to achieve.

I hope that progressive dialogue on ways to make unions more effective will continue. I thank Lynd and Moberg for their respective contributions to this dialogue.

David P. Koppelman
Counsel, Local 12, International Union
of Operating Engineers, Los Angeles

Hoopes remembered

DARLINGTON HOOPES, CHAIRPERSON EMERITUS of the Socialist Party, USA, died September 25 in a nursing home near his home in Reading, Pa., at age 93.

A lawyer and member of the Socialist Party of Pennsylvania, Hoopes twice ran for president on the Socialist ticket in 1952 and

1956 and as vice-presidential candidate in 1944. He served three terms in the Pennsylvania General Assembly in the '30s, and introduced and helped pass the state's child labor law. He also served for 20 years as the National chairperson of the Socialist Party, and helped found the Reading branches of the NAACP and ACLU.

He is survived by his wife, Hazelette Hoopes, son Darlington Jr., daughter Delite Hawk, and 12 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Donald F. Busky
State Chairperson, Socialist Party
of Pennsylvania

It can happen here

RECENTLY THE TELEVISION NETWORKS DECRIED the Czechoslovakian ban on the theatrical production of work by the Czech playwright Havel.

Perhaps we in America should remove the boards from our own eyes before we spotlight the obstruction in our Eastern brother's eye.

Covert censorship is alive and well in these United States. The boards of directors of dozens of city theaters insist their artistic directors reject any new drama that seriously threatens the economic status quo. Hard-hitting, socio-political drama of the Arthur Miller-Dario Fo genre is systematically avoided.

I should know. As a playwright with ten muscular dramas to his credit (*Hour of Consequence*, *Came the Deluge*, *Pariah*, *For They Shall Be Filled*), I have had my works

consistently rejected by the corrupt wizards of gauze. Hiding behind their shabby curtains, they mesmerize their audiences with superficial histrionics while short-circuiting every powerful drama that comes to their attention.

Nations like Czechoslovakia, Romania and Chile have nothing to teach the U.S. about denying unrestricted artistic expression.

J. Michael Anuskiewicz
Oakmont, Pa.

Unstuck

I ENJOYED ALEXANDER COCKBURN'S MEDITATION on the impact of World War I on British culture and society (ITT, Sept. 13). But since Alex is a real stickler for accurate statistics—witness the recent furor surrounding his column in *The Nation* on the number of Stalin's victims—I have to correct him on one point.

Referring to the Battle of the Somme, which began on July 1, 1916, Cockburn discusses "the consequences of having British generals like Haig order charges that saw a quarter of a million men machine-gunned in a single day." He's guilty here of misinterpreting the reference by British historian Raphael Samuel, quoted earlier in the article, to "the first day on the Somme—the battle in which 250,000 British soldiers had been sent to their deaths."

Samuel apparently meant here the *entire* course of the Battle of the Somme, which lasted four and a half months and cost some 630,000 Allied casualties (killed, wounded, missing and captured). The notorious "first day on the Somme" was a ghastly affair—"The Black Day of the British Army"—but the casualty toll among British forces by day's end was 57,470, including 19,240 killed. That's almost inconceivable (more casualties in one day than the British suffered in the Crimean, Boer and Korean wars combined), but a far cry from a quarter-million.

Adam Jones
Montreal

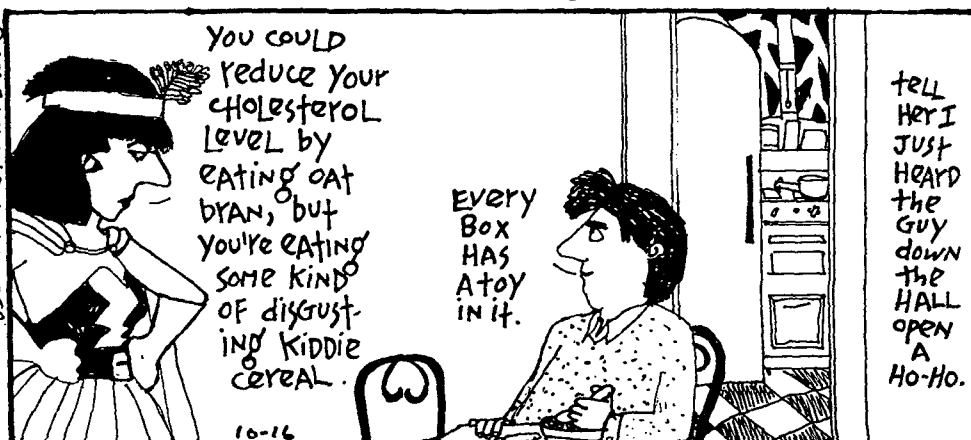
C.L.R. James

THE ILLUSTRATION ACCOMPANYING ERIC LOTT'S genial review of *C.L.R. James: The Artist as Revolutionary* (ITT, Sept. 20) was not credited: the artist is Margaret Glover.

In *These Times* readers may also wish to know that a C.L.R. James Society has been formed. Its address is in care of Calaloux Press, P.O. Box 82-725, Wellesley, MA 02181, phone (617) 237-2230.

Paul Buhle
Providence, R.I.

SYLVIA



By John F. Manley

LORD ACTON WAS HALF RIGHT. MONEY, as well as power, tends to corrupt; together, money and power corrupt absolutely. The corruption of Stanford University is a good example.

When the Stanford faculty senate, following pleas by Stanford President Donald Kennedy, recently declined even to study placing the Hoover Institution (an independent, conservative think tank) under normal academic governance, the corrupting power of money was plain for all to see.

Thirty years ago, when W. Glenn Campbell was put in charge of Hoover, its income was \$389,000, its endowment was only \$2 million and there were only a handful of Hoover fellows.

Today, Hoover's budget is \$15.7 million, its endowment is \$125 million, its physical plant has more than tripled, and its 86 resident scholars equal the political science, history and economics departments combined. Hoover runs its own press, places hundreds of op-ed articles every year in newspapers whose combined circulation exceeds \$60 million, has a satellite link-up so national and international media can tune into Stanford for policy opinions, and is reportedly planning a \$100 million fund drive that will nearly double its operations (1987 Hoover Annual Report, pp. 11-18, 104; Peter Duignan, *The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace*, 1989, passim; and press accounts).

Universities need money, so what is

Conservative think tank clouds Stanford reputation

wrong here?

What is wrong is that Hoover is an independent, politically active think tank pushing programs aided by the good name of a great university.

No university in America has anything like Hoover. The closest example was Georgetown's Center for Strategic and International Studies, but when CSIS embroiled Georgetown in controversy and

In truth, Hoover is not Stanford's institution. The conservative think tank operates independently of the university, but this distinction is lost to most people outside Stanford.

mounted a fund drive, Georgetown called in a panel of outside consultants and severed connections with the think tank. As one of the consultants, Stanley N. Katz of

the American Council of Learned Societies said CSIS provided "a valuable service, but not one to be served by a university." (*New York Times*, Nov. 28, 1987).

Stanford's mission is education. Hoover's is policy research and advocacy. The two necessarily conflict, and Stanford necessarily pays the price.

When, for example, the *Washington Post* broke the story of the Justice Department's report that Edwin Meese engaged in "conduct which should not be tolerated of any government employee," Stanford received damaging national publicity. Meese was identified as "a fellow with two conservative think tanks, the Heritage Foundation in Washington and Stanford University's Hoover Institution...." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 17, 1989).

In truth, Hoover is not Stanford's institution. It operates independently of Stanford, but this distinction is lost to most people outside Stanford. The university is regularly identified with the activities of the conservative think tank.

Some people say, "Oh, you just don't like Hoover because it's conservative." But if liberal donors offered a university millions of dollars for a Franklin Delano Roosevelt institution on social justice, and all the uni-

versity had to do to get the money was to look the other way while the FDR Institution pushed liberal causes, no self-respecting institution would touch such funds.

Why, given the obvious costs to Stanford's reputation, doesn't the university do something about Hoover? Campbell candidly answered this question in the *New York Times*: "The average donor to a major university is conservative; that's why Stanford would be foolish to sever its relations with us."

People who care about Stanford's integrity have been consistently rebuffed by Donald Kennedy and the Stanford trustees. But there are some hopeful signs. A year ago 18 eminent Stanford professors—including a Nobel laureate, a winner of the MacArthur Prize and a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian—signed an open letter supporting normal academic governance. And the recent faculty senate vote, though won by Kennedy, was close: a shift of just two votes would have changed the outcome.

As long as Hoover's political arm operates from Stanford, people will understandably identify it with Stanford. But perhaps, if more people become aware of what is going on here, and see its importance to higher education generally, the final outcome may be different. All who believe the university's only legitimate mission is the independent pursuit of truth have a stake in the continuing fight at Stanford over the Hoover Institution.

John F. Manley is professor of political science at Stanford University.

HOLIDAY

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IT WASN'T HIS DRIVING THAT CAUSED THE ALASKAN OIL SPILL. IT WAS YOURS.

It would be easy to blame the Valdez oil spill on one man. Or one company. Or even one industry.

Too easy.

Because the truth is, the spill was caused by a nation drunk on oil. And a government asleep at the wheel.

Immediately after the Valdez spill, the administration said it was an isolated incident. Tell that to the people in Texas, Rhode Island, and Delaware who have all had to deal with

oil spills of their own since the Valdez.

What it comes down to is this:

As long as we are dependent on fossil fuels and wasteful of the oil we have, more offshore drilling and disastrous oil spills are inevitable.

But together we can curb our nation's dependency on oil.



We can shelve Bush's plan to lease the continental shelf to offshore drillers in places like Alaska's Bristol Bay, Florida's Coral Reef, North Carolina's Outer Banks, New England's Georges Bank, and the entire California Coastline.

We can put pressure on Washington to tighten auto efficiency standards and restore the funding for renewable energy sources that Reagan took away.

We can convince

U.S. automakers to stop pushing large cars and muscle cars, and get back to marketing more fuel efficient automobiles.

Together, we can put the brakes on our nation's oil dependency before it's too late.

GREENPEACE

1436 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

By Tony Bouza

IN 1968 THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION on Civil Disorder issued a report containing one basic conclusion: "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." In that same report President Johnson called for an attack on poverty in language that today—after the pillaging of the Great Society's poverty pimps—sounds a little naive. The gloomy prophecies of its pages about blacks have, in the words of Malcolm X, "come home to roost."

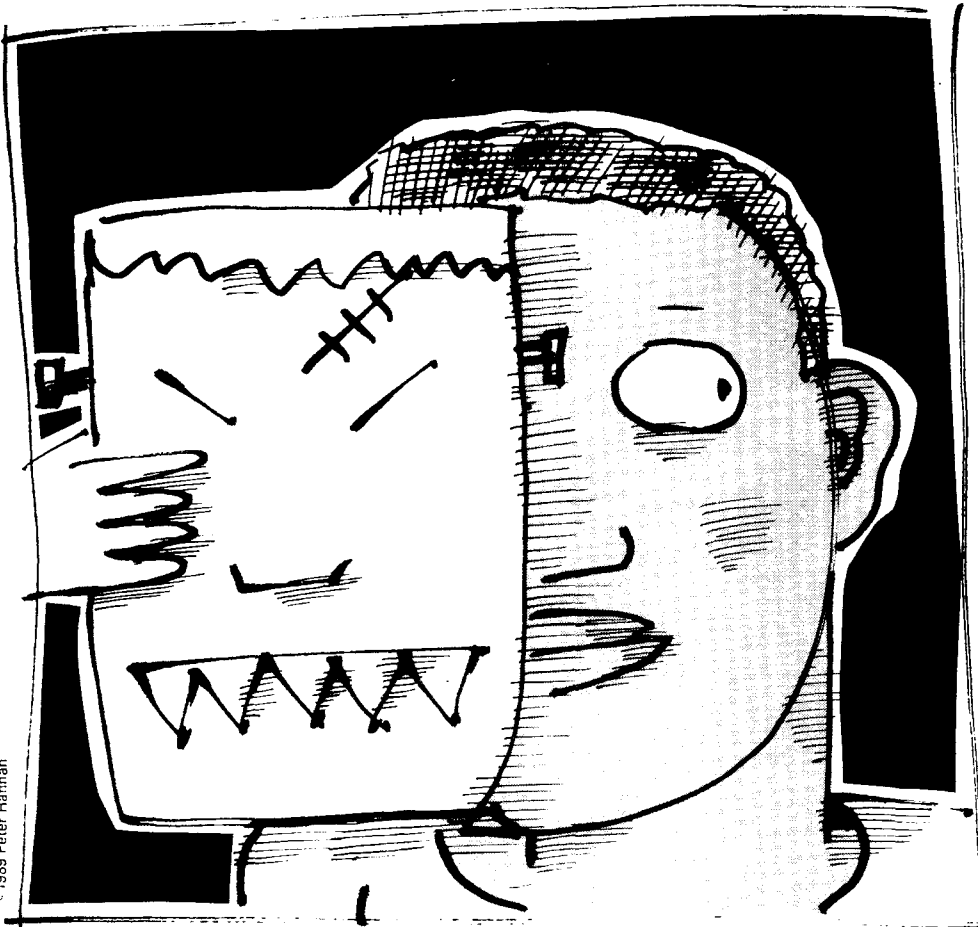
Our ghettos are awash with drugs, guns and murder, and they are fast spilling out into the "safer" streets of our cities. Across the land—in 1988—we saw record numbers of killings in Washington, D.C., Minneapolis and many other cities. A recent study concluded that almost 40 percent of New York's 1988 record number of murders were related to illegal drugs. But drug dealers are not just shooting each other. The reported number of innocent-onlooker shootings has also risen alarmingly. These hapless victims are contemptuously referred to as "mushrooms" by the gun-toting drug killers.

The underclass is the unmentionable secret that dominates the hidden thoughts of our police chiefs. They assess each other's prospects with such cautious questions, whispered, as "what's your minority population?" The specter of long, hot summers seldom strays far from their imaginations. Chiefs, of all backgrounds and races, discuss the prospects for riots or escalating waves of violence in their private councils.

Spike Lee's important film *Do the Right Thing* depicted the problems eloquently, even as it resisted the temptation to facile prescriptions. Yet the silence endures and the plight of the underclass worsens, by any measure. Income declines, education worsens, presence in jails and death rows increases and the absence of blacks and Hispanics in the board rooms or university halls is all too obvious.

The Urban League and other predictable little bands sound the alarm every year in learned reports and studies, but no one listens. The public's attention is not going to be given voluntarily; it has to be wrenched from it by a crisis. It's coming—in the form of escalating violence and crime, rioting, pillaging, looting and killing—what every police chief I've talked to fears and expects. Virginia Beach in 1989, Miami earlier that year and Shreveport in 1987 were only harbingers. The kindling is there—everywhere—awaiting only the spark of an incident. Even when the holocaust strikes we will be certain to focus on the spark and ignore the combustibles our moral myopia has created.

Blacks are the principal perpetrators of street crime in our society and its principal victims. The leading cause of death of young black men is murder. They are rarely present at the birth of their children. Our jails are filled beyond capacity with blacks. We've more than tripled the prison population in recent years and now we're starting to free them, pell-mell, because of court orders trying to curb overcrowding. Black males constitute 6 percent of our population and more than 40 percent of the prisoners. Our per capita incarceration rate is regularly described as being third in the



Pandering to popular fear won't stop crime

world to the Soviet Union and South Africa's one and two. Europeans are appalled at the length of our sentences, yet we like to believe ourselves a generous and easily abused people.

A failing system: The criminal justice system is collapsing. It resembles nothing so much as an oriental bazaar in its confusion and tawdriness. Yet the insistent call for more cops, tougher judges, bigger jails and more macho prosecutors grows shriller. Our Praetorian Guards have never been bigger, stronger or more efficient, but they're losing, in ways precisely analogous to the Vietnam War, and with the same official silences, body counts and promises of victory.

Nobody wants to look at the upstream questions of family, education, income, jobs, teen-age pregnancy or any of the other numberless disabilities visited upon our underclass. We've lost our passion for the huddled masses and tempest-tossed. In our myopia we focus on crack—the variable—and ignore the constant, the need for the underclass to escape the awful realities of their daily lives.

The black criminal is the product of 200 years of slavery, 100 years of dependence, 25 years of exclusion, poverty, ignorance, unemployability, drug and alcohol addiction, abuse and abusing and the brutal conditioning and neglect he's been subjected to since birth.

It is no accident that a group in Chicago, called the Beethoven Project, anxious to do something about the plight of black youngsters, is now concentrating on improving the parenting skills of pregnant teen-agers and the pre-natal care of their babies. Treating blacks as if they were just another immigrant group that came here voluntarily, with family, culture, religion and roots in-

tact, is one of the great misconceptions of our age. It ignores the devastating effects of deracination.

Blacks have been abandoned by white America—literally—in the flight to the suburbs, and figuratively in the corporate and government policies we have adopted. Even Jews, long in the vanguard of the social and economic struggles in America, have largely abandoned the black cause so many of them fought and even died for earlier in this century.

I once begged President Ford to come to the Bronx, today's Vietnam, to bear witness to the desolation eating at the country's

The answers to the problems of crime and drugs lie in a free people's discussions of tortured questions.

soul, but he wouldn't listen. By happenstance, Jimmy Carter did, and he made a famous stop at Charlotte Street. Now made into a milepost on the road to the presidency, Ronald Reagan followed suit and even engaged some colorful locals in a heated exchange that had the desired effect of getting it all on the evening news. Both made hollow promises that had the cruel effect of falsely raising hopes. Instead of remedies, the Bronx got Wedtech, a ghastly scandal involving politicians and the highest reaches of the federal establishment.

The wrong question: "My family was poor but they weren't criminals. Why should poverty be equated with crime?"

"Why don't the blacks pull themselves up

by their bootstraps the way other immigrant groups did?"

These questions ignore the uniqueness of the experience of blacks in America. Our racist instincts are fed every night by television images of manacled blacks being led away from a crime scene. Frequently there is a body bag in the picture. Our suspicions are confirmed.

The criminals we've created have to be punished and have to be understood. It is silly to argue that the criminal predator is the victim of horrible conditioning and, therefore, absolved of guilt. There have to be consequences for illegal actions; but there must also be an understanding of the causes, and some concomitant determination to do something about them. George Bush was right to label Willie Horton a monster that had to be destroyed but worse than wrong when he failed to ask where he had come from and what we had done to create him.

The recidivist must be held strictly to account, but it is not hyperbolic to say that we are as responsible for the existence of our criminal class as the German people were for the prosperity of the Nazis.

We paid a fearful price for our silences and hypocrisies during the Vietnam War. It took us a long time to discover the moral imperatives at work there. Our generals should have warned us, but instead they asked for more time, more funding and more of our children. Our urban generals, even as they shovel furiously against an overwhelming tide, should be crying out an alarm warning of the holocaust they clearly see coming.

As long as we pursue policies that exclude blacks from jobs, schools, housing and hope, and consign the black underclass to lives of violence, brutality and criminality, we are going to reap an ever increasing harvest of misery.

Solving the problems of crime, drugs, violence, guns and urban terror will mean clearing the swamp of poverty and redirecting the funds to programs that ensure education, jobs, housing, income, social service programs, inclusion and the prospect of making it for America's poor and desperate. It means redistributing income along more just and equitable lines. It means offering help to our fellow citizens, even as we threaten the failures with imprisonment. Sooner or later we're going to ask where all these criminals are coming from and how we helped to create them.

So what's to be done?

How tempting—the prescriptions of demagogues. The simple answers embedded in Bush's mindless drug program. The answers lie in a free people's discussions, searches, debates and tortured questions. These produce a lot of grief but that is how we distill our more sensible approaches. The civil rights movement, the feminist struggle, the environmental issue and the Vietnam War were all fought and decided on the streets and jails of our towns. Americans seized no prescriptions. They struggled with the questions and arrived at common approaches. Spike Lee is right—we need to discuss the problem, not embrace facile answers. Our politicians pander too much to our fears and offer too little challenge to our imaginations.

Tony Bouza, a former Minneapolis police chief, is commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Gaming.

By Fred Little

MORE AND MORE OF US, FROM New York merchant bankers to Tennessee auto workers, must confront the growing Japanese presence in our lives. So we're all looking for the straight skinny on the Land of the Rising Sun. Several years ago, Lane Ishikagawa, the Japanese-American playwright, summarized the situation in these words: "Japan is Hot!/Shogun is Hot!/Toshiro Mifune is Hot!" The point being, heat is not light.

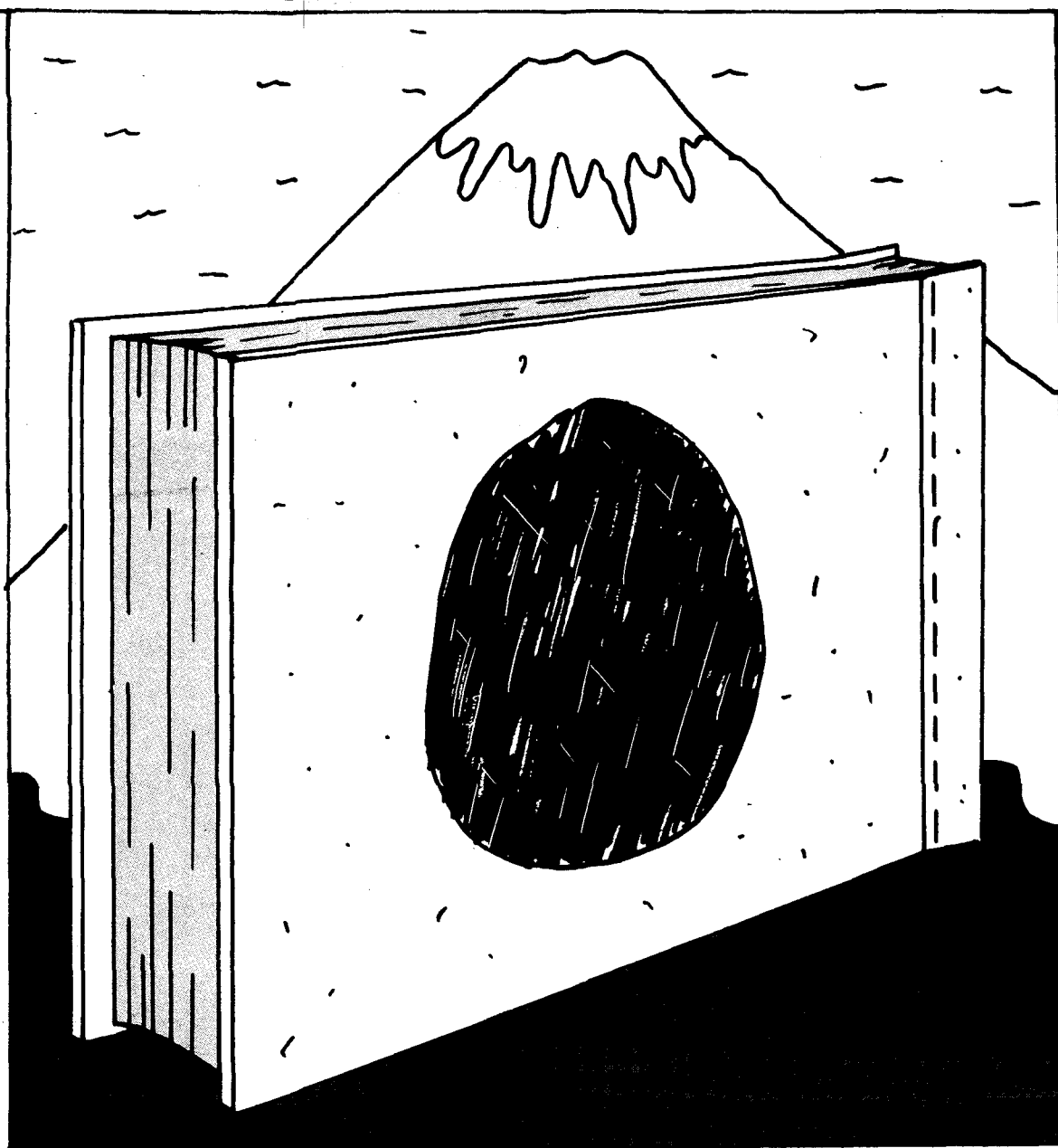
Which brings us to recent Harvard graduate John Burnham Schwartz' much-touted *Bicycle Days*, an account of a recent Yale graduate's coming of age during a summer job internship in Tokyo arranged by the boy's father. It's not a bad book, but the qualities that distinguish it stem from Schwartz' ability to render a pallid '80s Holden Caulfield. Anyone having more than a passing familiarity with the burgeoning field of Japan-related works is unlikely to find any surprises here.

Readers interested in an American view of Japanese life outside the urban centers would do well to turn to Leila Philip's *The Road Through Miyama*, an account of her apprenticeship to a modern Japanese potter in Kagoshima. Despite the difficulties of cleanly interweaving sufficient historical and cultural background to make the resonance of apparently simple daily incidents ring true, Philip has produced a memoir that is evocative without becoming formulaic or merely sentimental.

Rooted in the mud: She is particularly deft in her treatments of Japanese racism and sexism. Her light hand and pointed politeness will no doubt make many Americans as uncomfortable as the underlying observations may make many Japanese. She is to be commended on both counts. Moreover, her accounts of her time spent at the pottery wheel and in the rice fields are as firmly rooted in the mud as any reader could ask.

Yasunari Kawabata is not exactly a household name in the U.S., despite his having won the Nobel Prize for Literature. But the 80 short works brought together in North Point Press' *Palm-of-the-Hand Stories* are ample demonstration of why he should be. These compressed and delicately drawn sketches of a rigid society undergoing cataclysmic changes are artful and heart-rendingly beautiful (with brilliant translations by Lane Dunlop and J. Martin Holman).

As a means of conveying the sense and sensibility that lies behind the investment practices of the 12 largest banks in the world (all Japanese), this slender volume is vastly more useful than an entire library of breathless travel writing. And for all the beauty of the individual stories, the cumulative effect



c 1989 Miles DeCoster

Japanese currents: facing the Rising Sun

of these short (two-to-five-page) works is that of a devastating social critique that never lapses into diatribe.

Japanese folk ways: In a similar vein, Pantheon Books has recently released a volume of *Japanese Tales*. Edited and translated by Royall Tyler, the book is part of the Pantheon Fairy Tale and Folklore Library which also includes such notable works as *Italian Folktales* selected and retold by Italo Calvino and *American Indian Myths and Legends* selected by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz.

Given the variety of sources from which these tales are drawn, it is not surprising that the collection includes works sacred and profane, prurient and censorious. But it can

be quite jarring to find these qualities so often twinned in a single tale. The sensibility of these tales is vastly different from that of the relatively sprightly fables of Hans Christian Andersen or the more

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nightmarish versions set down earlier by the Brothers Grimm. Shot through with the presence of an elaborately developed hierarchy of power and social position, these tales are often driven by a spirit closer to the raucous energy of American Indian myths than the ordered solemnity of Arthurian tales. Throughout, the influence of gods, goblins and spirits of the dead is more reminiscent of Yoruba pantheism than of the radical mono-

theisms that continue to plague the Western world.

And the quantity of stories that depict a simultaneous invocation of apparently opposed deities evidences a deeply rooted tendency toward syncretism and accommodation. The only unifying quality in Tyler's selections is a raw and monumental terror of the natural world. Readers baffled by contemporary accounts of Japanese people who keep their sidewalks clean yet indiscriminately litter the trails of Mt. Fuji will come away from this collection of stories with a somewhat longer perspective, if not complete comprehension.

The Sword of No-Sword: Also notable are two recent works from Shambhala Publications: John Stevens' *The Sword of No-Sword: Life of the Master Warrior Teshu*, and Mitsugi Saotome's *The Principles of Aikido*. Like Miyamoto Musashi's *Book of Five Rings*, both works, while ostensibly "about" a martial art, go far beyond that classification. Indeed, both works are rooted in radical—in the linguistic and deconstructive as well as the political sense—attempts to transform the culture of "martial arts" to "the way of stopping weapons."

Given that Japan is perhaps the only nation to ever extirpate advanced weapons after their introduction, we might do well to consider their thoughts in this area (upon the expulsion of the Por-

tuguese in the 17th century, firearms were eliminated from the island in deference to the culture of the sword until the arrival of our own Commodore Perry).

As with Stevens' biography of Morihei Ueshiba (*Abundant Peace*), *The Sword of No-Sword* is closer to iconography than anything resembling the modern Western notion of critical biography. Even so, it is a valuable book. Readers familiar with Musashi's *Book of Five Rings* will find a much needed counterargument in Teshu. Like Musashi, Teshu is revered as a master of the brush as well as the sword.

Unlike Musashi, Teshu earned this reverence without resorting to killing. Given his intimate involvement in the civil war leading up to the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the feat is a considerable one. Until someone writes a definitive English-language biography that treats his political involvements as something more than the background to Teshu's pursuit of swordsmanship, calligraphy and zazen, Stevens' book will remain an essential introduction.

Mitsugi Saotome's *The Principles of Aikido*, though primarily intended for practitioners of the art, may also interest those concerned with the transformation of the species-wide predilection for violence into some more benign game. With the able assistance of editor Irene Wellington, Saotome has developed a series of clear and useful essays on how the traditional skills and habits of mind developed by the martial ways can be put to positive uses.

Students of language and Lacan will be delighted by the way that Saotome teases new meaning out of ossified terminology—or more to the point, restores original meaning to crusted-over concepts. And it is in such sections that the inherently fluid nature of thought rooted in the ideogram is most clearly conveyed. Readers may disagree as to whether this is a positive or negative quality, but they should leave the book with a clearer sense of linguistic and conversational strategies that too often strike Westerners as merely oblique.

And if it seems a long way around from talk of international banking and industry to a discussion of martial arts, consider these words from *The Principles of Aikido*: "While the Tokugawa government clung to its dreams of isolationism, the enlightened among the samurai took steps to embrace the new technologies that were being offered.... In fact, many of Japan's prominent leaders today in both business and government are descended from the ancient samurai families.... The ideal and true goal of budo remains the creation of a strong and benevolent society and the protection of that society's members from harm." And the 12 largest banks in the world think that they are doing just that. ■

Fred Little is a writer living in New York.

Given that Japan is perhaps the only nation to ever extirpate advanced weapons after their introduction, we might do well to consider their thoughts in this area.

**Upheaval in the Quiet Zone:
A History of Hospital
Workers' Union, Local 1199**
By Leon Fink and Brian Greenberg
University of Illinois Press
320 pp., \$9.95

By David Moberg

Organizing with intensive care



Local 1199 linked labor and the civil rights movement more closely than any other organization.

THE STORY OF LOCAL 1199 IS AT times romantic and heroic, at times tragic and discouraging. But it reveals both the potential and the pitfalls for socially conscious unionism in the U.S. A tiny, left-wing, mainly white, male union of New York pharmacists that survived the anti-Communist purges of the late '40s mainly because it was inconsequential, Local 1199 exploded in the '60s as the crusading organizer of abjectly poor hospital workers who were mainly black and Hispanic women.

The union wrought major changes in the lives of the lower ranks of hospital workers and linked labor and the civil rights movement more closely than any other organization. It was an inspiration, like the United Farmworkers, to people who saw the labor movement becoming an insular, cautious defender of better-off workers. When few unions seriously tried to organize the newly booming service sector, Local 1199 showed it could be done—at least under some circumstances.

Despite its successes, the union began to falter in the '70s: it could not sustain its initial rapid organizing surge beyond New York City, and throughout the past decade the union has been wracked by internal battles marked by charges of racism in a union that had made interracialism one of its main tenets.

In *Upheaval in the Quiet Zone*, historians Leon Fink and Brian Greenberg tell the tale in a straightforward manner that doesn't always convey the drama but does provide a comprehensive, fair-minded and revealing account of one of the most important strands of recent labor history. They rely not only on documents but their own interviews with key participants, including the easily neglected but critical natural leaders within the workers' own ranks.

This is history that is not far behind the headlines, as the story keeps unfolding: in early October Local 1199 went down to a strike deadline for 50,000 workers at the major private, non-profit hospitals in New York City. Its solid contract victory may demonstrate the union's resurrection under the leadership of its new president, Dennis Rivera, after the factionalized weakness of recent years. And if David Dinkins wins the New York mayoralty, as seems likely, Local 1199 will be able to claim a big share of responsibility for its vigorous support.

Challenges old and new: In 1957 Elliott Godoff—a Communist organizer who had made several unsuccessful stabs over two decades at organizing hospital workers under different union auspices—met with longtime Local 1199 President Leon

Davis, an ex-Communist who was looking for new challenges.

They decided to target Montefiore Hospital, where the executives were self-consciously liberal. A new drive for efficiency was upsetting the old paternalistic regime, especially for the service workers who became the focus of 1199 organizing. Montefiore recognized the union, but it took a strike in 1959 and continual pressure afterwards to spread unionism to other private, non-profit hospitals, whose administrators (and businessman directors) were more viscerally anti-union.

As Fink and Greenberg describe it, there were several critical elements. First, there was careful organizing, often department by department to adapt to the fragmented workforce, and a cleverly calculated escalation of demonstrations of militancy to send a message to management and build the union.

But the organizing was always linked to the civil rights movement, and the demands were cast in terms of social justice. This pronounced civil rights character energized the black and Hispanic workers and helped gain support in the black community and among liberals. During the turbulent '60s the threat of mass black protest gave added force to the union's own militancy.

Despite hostility toward 1199's old-left leadership by much of the labor movement, the fledgling union benefited immensely from the decision by the head of the New York Central Labor Council, Harry Van Arsdale, to rally united labor strength behind the organizing drives.

But ultimately, it appears from Fink and Greenberg's account, Local 1199 succeeded because it was able to galvanize all these elements to gain political clout. Even though they were negotiating with private hospitals, increasingly those hospitals relied on public funds from the state and federal governments (as well as insurance payments). Organizing and later bargaining—such as the celebrated 1968 win of a \$100 a week minimum pay—relied on a

complex interplay of hospital administrators dependent on public money and public officials, and restive blacks who could pressure hospital administrators. In New York's liberal political climate, the squeeze plays worked.

Couldn't in Carolina: But when Local 1199 tried to respond to hospital workers in Charlestown, S.C., in 1969, the formula proved less successful. They mustered strong support from civil rights groups but not from the black community as a whole, nor from the small local labor movement. They also faced much more conservative, intransigent political and hospital leadership. As street protests escalated, federal political intervention salvaged something for the union, but 1199 could not consolidate a real victory.

As the union—expanded in 1973 to the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees—made organizing forays into other cities where the hospital workforce was less black, it found that it was hard to organize white workers with a militant black union. Despite the union's commitment to industrial unionism and success in organizing some nursing and technical workers into semi-autonomous units, many skilled or white workers were reluctant to identify with a union of the least skilled.

But from the mid-'70s on, the union ran into increasingly sophisticated anti-union tactics from employers who took advantage of delaying tactics available after the union succeeded in getting hospital workers covered by federal labor laws. Financial pressures on hospitals also stifled management opposition. Nevertheless, in their first 25 years unionized hospital workers gained 140 percent in real income.

Fink and Greenberg share earlier criticisms of Local 1199 for sticking to a militant brand of bread-and-butter unionism that rarely questioned the nature of the health-care delivery system. Certainly 1199 was willing, unlike most unions, to march against the war in Vietnam and for countless other causes, and it took

the lead in using art, theater, music and literature to advance its cause and enrich its members' lives. But the union's collective bargaining goals remained fairly conventional, even though it argues that better pay and training for its members would stabilize and improve medical care.

Likewise, despite its admirable work in using rank-and-file workers as organizers and involving many members in union activities, the union remained under the tight control of Davis and his close associates, like Jesse Olson and Moe Foner (an energetic publicist, cultural organizer and coalition-builder).

The union began to splinter as it tried simultaneously to make the transition to a new generation of black leaders and to negotiate a merger with the Service Employees Union. Davis' successor in New York, Doris Turner, was a leader from the ranks who never seemed to understand or identify with the broad social consciousness of the union's old leadership. She took a politically conservative turn and badly mangled collective bargaining, then won re-election only through fraud.

The old guard leadership regained indirect control through a new slate headed by another black woman, Georgianna Johnson, but she, too, was hardly cut out for the task. In fighting against the old guard leader and their allies, Turner and Johnson resorted to Red-baiting and alliances with some of the most conservative labor forces—especially in the Retail, Wholesale and Distributive Workers Union that had been 1199's distant parent union of convenience only.

(Dis)integration: But many blacks, including some principled black leftists who appreciated the union's historic mission, deeply resented what they saw as a manipulation of these black women and a denial of black self-determination. The old civil rights coalition politics of the '60s had disintegrated outside the union, and it was strained inside as well.

Yet why did the old leadership cultivate and promote black leaders

who could not carry on the union's work? If the union had been more democratic all along, could it have avoided some of these crises of transition? The new leaders never shared the intellectual or leftist milieu of the union's founders and often seemed more interested in personal power and reward than a broader social vision. Certainly Local 1199's experience must give pause to those who romantically think that leaders rising from the ranks must always be right. But it also raises troubling questions about the tensions between black aspirations and the old-left ideal of interracial class-based solidarity.

The problem isn't so much the "Red" old guard, as some critics maintain, since most unions are rigidly "democratic centralist" even when they're rabidly anti-Communist, but rather the continuing deep gulf in the culture at large between blacks and whites. The old guard's political and union strategy was far superior to anything Turner or Johnson represented, but black ethnic identification meant more to a majority of Local 1199's black members.

Even in the short time since the writing of this book, the turmoil continued. Henry Nicholas, the black president of the National Hospital

LABOR

Union (which had separated from New York Local 1199 during the '80s turmoil), broke with much of the union's leadership (including the old guard) over the long-sought merger with the Service Employees Union. Finally, in a vote earlier this year, about two-thirds of the National Union membership went with the Service Employees. The one-third loyal to Nicholas went to AFSCME (state, county and municipal workers).

But Local 1199 may be bouncing back with new unity. It was an open supporter of Jesse Jackson's presidential candidacy, but it also carries clout with a wide range of New York elected officials. These leaders pressured the private hospitals for settlement as this year's contract deadline neared, and will probably provide enough money to pay the bill (roughly a 24 percent net increase over three years for hospital labor costs) through the state legislature. Earlier the union had won contracts at the Catholic hospitals (largely thanks to the pro-labor views of Cardinal John O'Connor) and several black-administered hospitals. Then prestigious Columbia-Presbyterian cracked. Officials there realized that they could better deal with their financial problems by uniting with the union politically rather than trying to hold down wages.

The old tensions—of democracy and centralism, of racial self-determination and industrial unionism, and of widely varied racial and cultural backgrounds of workers from janitors to nurses—have surely not disappeared. But for the moment at least, they may be tamed. ■

By Jeremiah Creedon

That Cannes can of worms: sex, lies and the right thing

IN MINNEAPOLIS OVER THE LAST FEW months, the talk about popular culture has been largely confined to three items. Two are nationally known: Spike Lee's movie *Do the Right Thing* and Steven Soderbergh's *sex, lies and videotape*. The third is some local buzz about Prince, the homeboy turned rock superstar, who has been descending on various nightspots lately with his current celebrity girlfriend, Kim Basinger.

It is clear to me that a peculiar dialectic has been underway in this predominantly white city. Summer began with *Do the Right Thing* articulating a thesis about black American life that is unfamiliar in these parts. The white response, or antithesis, arrived a few weeks later with the quite familiar obsessions that form *sex, lies*. Prince and Kim deserve some credit for the sensational synthesis—a highly visible love affair between a black musical genius and the one woman in the public eye who can out-blond the average Minnesotan. But the unsung angel of history who brought them together is, of course, Batman.

The real issue hidden amid all this blarney was first suggested last May, in France, when *sex, lies* beat out *Do the Right Thing* for top honors at the Cannes Film Festival. The decision apparently annoyed Lee, who thought his film had not been given its due. I believe he criticized the winning work as a "middle-class white boy's masturbatory fantasy," but if he no longer takes credit for this definition, then I will. And being a middle-class white boy myself, I should know.

The feel-good conundrum: My personal role in all this is only to argue that *Do the Right Thing* is by far the better film. The need for someone to make this case stems partly from the judgment at Cannes, but even more so from the fact that most moviegoers in Minneapolis, if not elsewhere in America, seem to share this opinion. Many of my acquaintances wrinkled their noses with ambivalence over *Do the Right Thing*. Being liberals for the most part, they usually chose to express their uneasiness with the film in aesthetic terms. Some did not like the ending because it "offered no solutions" to racial conflict, or because it "advocated violence." Some said the film was "unrealistic" in that no one was shown selling or doing drugs. Some said the film simply did not make them "feel good," which for much of the popular audience is the ultimate test and the one unpardonable sin.

In contrast, *sex, lies* was an immediate smash. The movie opened in August at a single theater in the Uptown area, the local center of white urban hipness. Night after night the dating couples lined up for blocks, eager to see what was, well, what Lee supposedly said it was: the MCWBMF. This enthusiasm lasted

until someone spied Prince and Kim slipping into the theater through a side door. Stop the press! When word of their entrance made the morning paper, attendance became mandatory. And the lines grew longer.

It isn't like Prince to stumble into being an ad for anything, least of all an MCWBMF. But it's fitting that he did. After all, few blacks have used

the white media more shrewdly in creating their mystique; and when it comes to marketing masturbatory fantasies to a white audience, Prince is king.

There's an indirect reference to this matter in Lee's movie. You may remember the dialogue between Mookie and Sal's son Pino, the mean one, about white America's odd fascination with black American

superstars. Mookie reminds Pino that Prince is one of his favorite people; and Pino says, yeah, but Prince is different, not black in the way other blacks are black. It is one of many moments when Lee draws attention to the paradoxical relationship between races in this country. This central theme in the movie is also one of the most profound and characteristic themes in American

life, and no other artist since James Baldwin, black or white, so ambitiously addresses it.

In *sex, lies*, the only reference to blackness I can recall offhand is the leather miniskirt worn by the character Cynthia. She is wearing it when she climbs on top of her sister's husband, John, for an adulterous romp early in the film. I remember the skirt because she never takes it off in the scene, and because Soderbergh brings the crinkle of leather high up in the aural mix—a sound that reminded me of someone squirming in a saddle.

A comparison based on things black may seem like a cheap shot, but it reveals the difference in

Rosie Perez and Spike Lee in *Do the Right Thing*: sensuality that gives the film a jolt.



©1989 Universal City Studios, Inc.

themes between these movies. The skirt is a fitting emblem for the personal and material obsessions that shape sex, lies—and also shape the class-defined imagination this film most directly speaks to. Spike has his own private obsessions, and they surface throughout his work; but he

FILM

transcends them in this latest film by expanding his concerns beyond the personal realm and into the social. When measured by this standard, which boils down to an issue of artistic maturity, *Do the Right Thing* is undeniably more impressive.

Skirting the issue: Before going on I must say that I enjoyed sex, lies, which is Soderbergh's first major film. I enjoyed it for the same reasons I enjoyed Spike's first major film, *She's Gotta Have It*. Soderbergh's direction as well as the acting are quite accomplished, and the film's "auteurish" individuality made it much more interesting than so many pictures assembled by committee.

But just because Soderbergh remains true to his vision does not mean his vision is yet a great one. His choice to remain here within a personal universe does not invalidate his obvious artistry, but it does define its scope.

A good place to begin examining this scope is again in the scene that features Cynthia's miniskirt. Soderbergh's reliance on the erotic reputation of black leather is one of many moments in the film when he tips his cultural hand. This scene corresponds to the point in *Do the Right Thing* when Mookie trails the ice cube over his girlfriend's nude body. Both are male fantasies that provide some insight into what drove these men to be filmmakers to begin with, and both give their respective narratives an erotic jolt. But they also proceed in significantly different ways, suggesting the different notions of sexuality that underlie them.

A telling stylistic difference is that Spike's scene appeals directly to the eye, via the nude female form, while Soderbergh diffuses his erotic message into various sounds and secondary objects. I have heard people praise Soderbergh for managing to titillate his audience without baring so much as a nipple. This feat is apparently considered less an exploitation of women, at least compared to the interludes of cinematic leering that Spike, and Eddie Murphy for that matter, routinely allow themselves when making their movies. These black artists seem to consciously flout the feminist sensitivities that many white male narrative artists now either share or respect or cynically mimic. To a white audience, this representation of sex may appear both retrogressive and yet vital, at once repulsive and alluring. Lee certainly recognizes the commercial value in stirring this response, which both reinforces and capitalizes on the white perception of black sexuality in general.

This perception contains a lot of

envy—envy of a sexuality that appears, to an empowered class, less complicated by its own social and economic sophistication. This is a role traditionally projected on the underclasses, who then vicariously fulfill the sexual desires of those with more privilege. Like Prince and other black cultural heroes, Lee knows how to exploit this dynamic; unlike them, he also draws attention to it. The contradiction between exploiting such imposed roles at the same time he is debunking them creates a paradoxical complexity in *Do the Right Thing* that is seldom found in popular art.

The big lie: Soderbergh's portrayal of sex is less forthright in pointing out its own dishonesties. This film is indeed about sex and lies, though the most profound lies are never addressed—the habitual, unconscious lies that both the director and his natural audience are apt to tell themselves. The biggest lie in the film is its perceived sympathy toward women. Soderbergh reminds me of the novelist Milan Kundera in this sense, or the French filmmakers he is often compared to, whose sexism has been disguised in such a way that only a fellow man is likely to blow the whistle on them. I'll pursue this charge later.

On another level, the film is a record of the petty lies that a particular social group (to which I belong) entertains about its own sexuality. Various motifs, including black leather and the video camera, typify the objects and scenarios through which this group now tends to shunt its sexual desires. What appears, then, to be a nonexploitative representation of sex may only show how deeply a wider, less obvious, exploitation of sex has been internalized—by both the director and his audience.

In other words, there is nothing inherently virtuous about actors putting on their clothes for cinematic sex rather than taking them off. For me, it is just another example of the way sexual desire must be dressed up in a fetishized wardrobe—be it the trappings of violence, wealth or exoticized ethnicity—before the white popular audience can bear to gaze on it. This coyness amounts to another self-deception, which Soderbergh, like any good storyteller, intuitively manipulates. But he is limited in not recognizing these self-deceptions as part of a cultural legacy he also shares.

One reason for this myopia—beyond the obvious one that Soderbergh is still a very young man—can be traced to another piece of cultural baggage. Soderbergh and his audience are able to entertain a notion of "The Self" as an autonomous entity whose health, or lack of it, is not influenced by social, historical or economic forces. Instead, the nature of The Self is attributed to various timeless "archetypes" and other "universal" factors. All these elements play a role in shaping one's identity, of course, but the utter glorification of the second list over the first is quite revealing. In a prac-

tical sense, it focuses all critical attention inward rather than outward onto the social order, where in fact many maladies of the modern Self—say, sexual dysfunction—may actually originate.

Coin of the realm: Sex, lies can be called pure fantasy in that the world beyond the Self never intrudes. The difference between Soderbergh's hero dream and Lee's more realistic drama (in which his hero dream is reduced to a vestige) can be seen in the use of another telling emblem—money.

I can recall only one moment when money is directly mentioned in sex, lies. One of the women asks Graham, the impotent hero, where he gets the money for tapes and rent. Under the bed, he claims. She wonders what he'll do when the money runs out. It won't, he whispers, and the issue is dropped. Forever. Reality, like an unwelcome peddler, never gets a foot in the door.

In contrast, money, the reality principle made manifest, figures throughout *Do the Right Thing*. The crescendo of violence builds from a small disharmonic warble over whether the character Buggin' Out

Summer hits that keep hitting nerves: *Do the Right Thing* and sex, lies and videotape.

must pay for extra cheese on his slice of pizza. Mookie trades pizza for money, gives the money to Sal, who returns a fraction to Mookie as pay—but he won't give Mookie an advance. Even the images of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X are constantly being bought and sold. The movie ends with an angry transaction: Sal and Mookie hurl hundred-dollar bills at each other, suggesting among so many other things that the reality of money is inescapable.

And so is history. One of the more complex vignettes in *Do the Right Thing* involves the relationship between Mookie, Mookie's sister,

Jade, and Mookie's boss, Sal. Mookie jealously confronts Sal over his special affection for Jade, accusing him of a sexual motive. She, in turn, berates Mookie for being out of line. Her implicit charge is that he's projecting a fantasy or desire of his own onto Sal. Viewed this way—through the lens of a middle-class, Self-oriented psychology—the relationship looks similar to the various "primal" triangles set up in Soderbergh's film. In one sense, it may be.

But Lee also gives the scene a social and historical component, thus rendering things more ambiguous. If watched carefully, the scene plays like an allegorical tableau based on the relation between black males and white males, a relation born in the fact of slavery and renewed by Sal's social dominance, however subtle or benevolent. Lee carefully indicates that Sal, though well-intended, does idealize Janey, who incidentally is the only one to get anything free in the shop, if not in the movie. Through the social and historical lens, even white generosity becomes a divisive force that sunders the basic units of black culture. So does sexual favoritism—or the step a black woman might gain on her brother in terms of social empowerment, by refusing any part in the unresolved grudge between black and white men. She too has a reason to choose a Self-oriented reading over the historical one.

In fact, the vignette, like the best dramatic art, is intricate enough to be read in several ways: it is clearly an individual case arising from Mookie's personal surliness, and just as clearly the illustration of a wider dynamic with more profound applications.

Classic tragedy: The overall impact of *Do the Right Thing* has been called "tragic" in the classic sense. I would agree. Tragedy can be defined in dialectical terms as the human suffering caused by the clash between "valid but partial" human claims. The tragedian's ability to convey the complexities and contradictions of human life, and to suggest that people live in both inner and outer worlds, are the reasons why tragedy is given eminence

among the narrative arts.

It has also been argued that tragedy finds its highest expression during times of historic change. The Athenian age of tragedy, for instance, presupposed an audience with an awareness of the dramatic element in their collective experience—the emergence of a democratic, cosmopolitan city state from a tribal, despotic past. Lee challenges the modern American multiracial audience to recognize an equally dramatic truth about themselves. Their various stories also form one monumental story—a thoroughly American story told in *Do the Right Thing* by a uniquely American artist working in an innately American medium.

In contrast, the final statement made by sex, lies is more narrow, provincial and implausible. The fairytale ending—in which the impotent Graham and the frigid, materialistic Ann end up together—falls apart under scrutiny. The film "works" only if one recognizes what the story is really about. It is not about the search for love between a man and a woman, and certainly not about a woman who discovers her own strength and identity. Rather, I think it can be seen as a revenge fantasy played out by one man against another. Ann is merely a trophy that Graham seizes from John in the act of destroying him. The male-dominated household is not challenged, and the movie ends by reinscribing the social order from which it began. That few see the story this way is both proof of Soderbergh's considerable talents and also of his potential limitations.

The reluctance among my peers to accept this interpretation makes sense, I suppose. It resembles the reluctance here, in Minneapolis, to grant *Do the Right Thing* any special merit. Both positions spring from the tricks of self-deception that a genteel, well-meaning, liberal white society now plays on itself as a matter of course. Racism isn't racism if you can express it in aesthetic terms. And tragedy isn't tragedy unless someone in the picture is wearing sandals or moaning about a Danish king, dead for a thousand years. ■

Jeremiah Creedon is a writer and critic living in Minneapolis.



Morrison

Continued from page 11

while openly backing an income tax. Voters still fear that a new income tax would increase their tax burden rather than merely replace the state's current reliance on sales and other taxes. Nevertheless, the few politicians willing to openly back Morrison at this point, such as Rapoport and former House Speaker Irv Stolberg, are crusaders for an income tax. So Morrison is trying to play to them as well as to middle-class homeowners and businesspeople also smarting from high taxes.

Morrison began the press conference by calling the state's current tax structure a flat-out failure. It produces a "roller coaster of a financial system," with a \$300 million surplus one year, an \$800 million deficit the next, a \$100 surplus the next. That makes it hard to count on being able to fund schools, road repairs, homeless shelters—all challenges that have fallen to state government in the '80s under Reagan-Bush federal budget cutbacks.

Morrison won't find much of an argument there. In a survey released this month by Connecticut Public Broadcasting, for instance, state residents listed taxes as the leading issue. And more than 60 percent of those surveyed say the public schools aren't adequately educating children. The legislature passed close to \$1 billion in random tax increases this year. Because of the unpredictability of the sales tax, legislators had falsely counted on a deficit; it now appears the state might end the fiscal year with a surplus of up to \$300 million.

In addition, Morrison said, the system is inequitable—not just to the poor, but to the middle class and to businesses paying extra

taxes invented to juggle the unpredictable budget into line. "I'm not interested in taxing more. The average middle-class people are paying too much," Morrison said. "An income tax can raise or lower taxes. The goal is an equitable tax structure. Income taxes are no solution in themselves."

So would he, like O'Neill, veto any income tax bill? "I don't think anybody who wants to lead a state should take anything off the table," he replied, saying that it all depends on "context"—fitting into a sensible overall system that collects and spends money wisely. He called pledges like O'Neill's "demagoguery," dangerous posturing that prevents the state from tackling a complex problem like revamping its fiscal system.

Such a promise to leave all options "on the table" is enough to hearten income tax proponents such as Rapoport, who believes that a candidate winning statewide office with such a position will speed up the timetable for passing an income tax. "What is essential, and what Bruce has done, is not to take the so-called 'pledge' to veto any income tax bill out of hand," Rapoport says. "If Bruce were to sustain the issue in the campaign, and were he to win, he could make it possible to make a decision on taxes with all options on the table."

How do you sell that to voters? You can't visit every voter's living room for half an hour to explain your position. And you can count on O'Neill to immediately label Morrison soft on the issue, secretly pro-income tax. In fact, an O'Neill backer, state Democratic Party Chairman John Droney, did just that within hours of Morrison's press conference. How do you counteract such a simple, volatile label when your explanation can't be distilled into a buzzword or even a sentence?

At his press conference, Morrison, mindful of such questions, challenged the media to prevent the issue from becoming a facile "false debate." He will have to challenge more than the media in coming months. When major political changes occur, the conventional wisdom is always the last to catch on. That was true with some of the recent mayoral primary upsets in Connecticut. Like those primary victors, Morrison must successfully challenge voters to buck that conventional wisdom. Or else he'll follow Walter Mondale's example of offering a prediction on taxes that may indeed prove true—even though voters refuse to acknowledge it at the polls.

Paul Bass is a political reporter for the *New Haven Advocate*, where a version of this story originally appeared.

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Housing

Continued from page 7

spending priorities must be altered to address the housing crisis. Ronald Shiffman, a longtime New York housing activist who heads the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development, notes that in 1976, for every federal dollar that went to the military, 22 cents was allocated for housing programs. Today, for every dollar spent on the military, just one cent goes to housing.

Despite rhetoric that he wants to turn the department into an anti-poverty agency, HUD Secretary Jack Kemp has been unwilling to press Congress to significantly increase funding for the department. Audrey Scott, HUD's general deputy assistant secretary for community planning and development, recently commented that the federal government no longer needs to spend as much on housing in the cities as it did in the '70s. But only New York City has been able to attempt any large-scale housing program with its own funds, spending more than the country's next 50 largest cities combined (see accompanying story).

Although Kemp has talked about partnerships with nonprofit housing developers and activists, his vision is likely to remain narrow. According to a housing trade newsletter, HUD Undersecretary Alfred DelliBovi recently issued a memo warning his boss, "Many of these people are lobbyists for the welfare state who do not share our idea of 'Recapturing the American Dream.'"

CALENDAR

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of *ITT Calendar*.

NEW YORK

October 17-22

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL

TUESDAY, Oct. 17 - Economic Literacy for Activists; Bill Tabb; 6 p.m.; \$40.

THURSDAY, Oct. 19 - African-Americans in Cinema; Armond White; 6 p.m.; \$30. The Revolution in the Household; Harriet Fraad; 8 p.m.; \$5.

FRIDAY, Oct. 20 - History of the American Labor Party; Jerry Meyer, Annette Rubinstein; 7 p.m.; \$15.

SATURDAY, Oct. 21 - Performance, Music by Juba; 8 p.m.; \$6.

SUNDAY, Oct. 22 - Counter-Intelligence Cabaret; Dave Lippman, Brian Glick; 7 p.m.; \$6.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013, (212) 941-0332.

CLEVELAND, OH

October 21

Campus/Labor Institute featuring Millio Jeffrey, Mark Levinson, Anne Hill and others in workshops and sessions on building labor solidarity and grass-roots organizing. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at St. Augustine's Church, 2486 West 14th St. Limited space; inquire today. Sponsored by the American Solidarity Movement, a project of the Democratic Socialists of America. For more info: DSA, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

BALTIMORE, MD

November 10

"Toward the Nineties and Beyond." DSA public meeting featuring Cornel West, journalist Robert Kuttner and others at 8 p.m. at the Baltimore Hilton, 1726 Reisterstown Road, Pikesville (Exit 20 off Beltway). \$3 admission. For more info: DSA, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

November 10-12

1989 National Convention of the Democratic Socialists of America at the Baltimore Hilton, 1726 Reisterstown Road, with plenaries, workshops on domestic and international politics featuring Irving Howe, Barbara Ehrenreich, Cornel West, James Farmer and others. More information: DSA, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

Still, Congress is beginning to feel the pressure. Even before most Housing Now! demonstrators reached Capitol Hill, housing activists pressed congressional leaders to increase low-income housing funding to pre-Reagan levels. Sylvia Martinez, who heads the Washington, D.C., office of the National Coalition for the Homeless, says both House Speaker Foley and Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME) told her they would introduce bills that would dramatically increase HUD funding.

Though she called this "a victory before the march even started," Martinez warned that a promise to introduce a bill doesn't necessarily mean the congressional leaders will use their clout to bring the measure before Congress. After noting that increased HUD funds must be targeted toward those with the lowest incomes in order to stem the tide of homelessness, she also warned that many Congress members share Kemp's passion for programs primarily geared to aid first-time home buyers.

Currently, the deck appears stacked against any bill that would call for a serious increase in HUD funding. While Rep. Charles Schumer (D-NY) believes that the HUD scandal has at least returned political attention to the agency after its quiet dismantling under Secretary Samuel Pierce, that optimism is balanced by Congress' current makeup. Few Congress members from inner-city districts—where the housing and homelessness crises are most acute—sit on important housing and budget committees, where bills are molded and momentum for passage is gained.

Looking ahead: Even the bipartisan National Affordable Housing Act, sponsored by Sens. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) and Alan Cranston (D-CA), which calls for a modest \$4 billion increase in HUD funding in the coming year, appears to have been sidetracked. Because of the billions of dollars in losses from the HUD scandal, the savings and loan bailout, and continuing deficit-related budgetary pressure, any bill calling for increased housing funds faces a reluctant Congress. What's more, over the next five years contracts for approximately one million privately owned apartments subsidized under a major federal housing program will expire. If Congress does not renew these contracts, which may cost \$10 billion just for 1990 and 1991, nearly one-quarter of all federally subsidized apartments would become unavailable to low-income renters.

So far, Congress and the president have failed to face up to the housing crisis. Even the 1987 Stewart B. McKinney Act, hailed by Bush and congressional leaders for its aid to the homeless, remains woefully underfunded. Of the \$630 million allocated last year under the Act—which has essentially become the nation's poor law—only a little more than half was actually appropriated.

Even if funded at the billion-dollar level requested for this year, the McKinney Act is only an empty promise. Much of the money is for building shelters and other "transitional" housing. Unless the federal government begins to build affordable housing, these shelters will become the poor houses of the 1990s and the ranks of the homeless will continue to swell on the streets of our cities and towns.

But the Housing Now! march demonstrated that many of the poor refuse to be quietly relegated to such a fate. Women like Earlene Scales and Robin Townes have come to Washington to make their voices heard. The homeless are mobilized for action.

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ORGANIZATIONS

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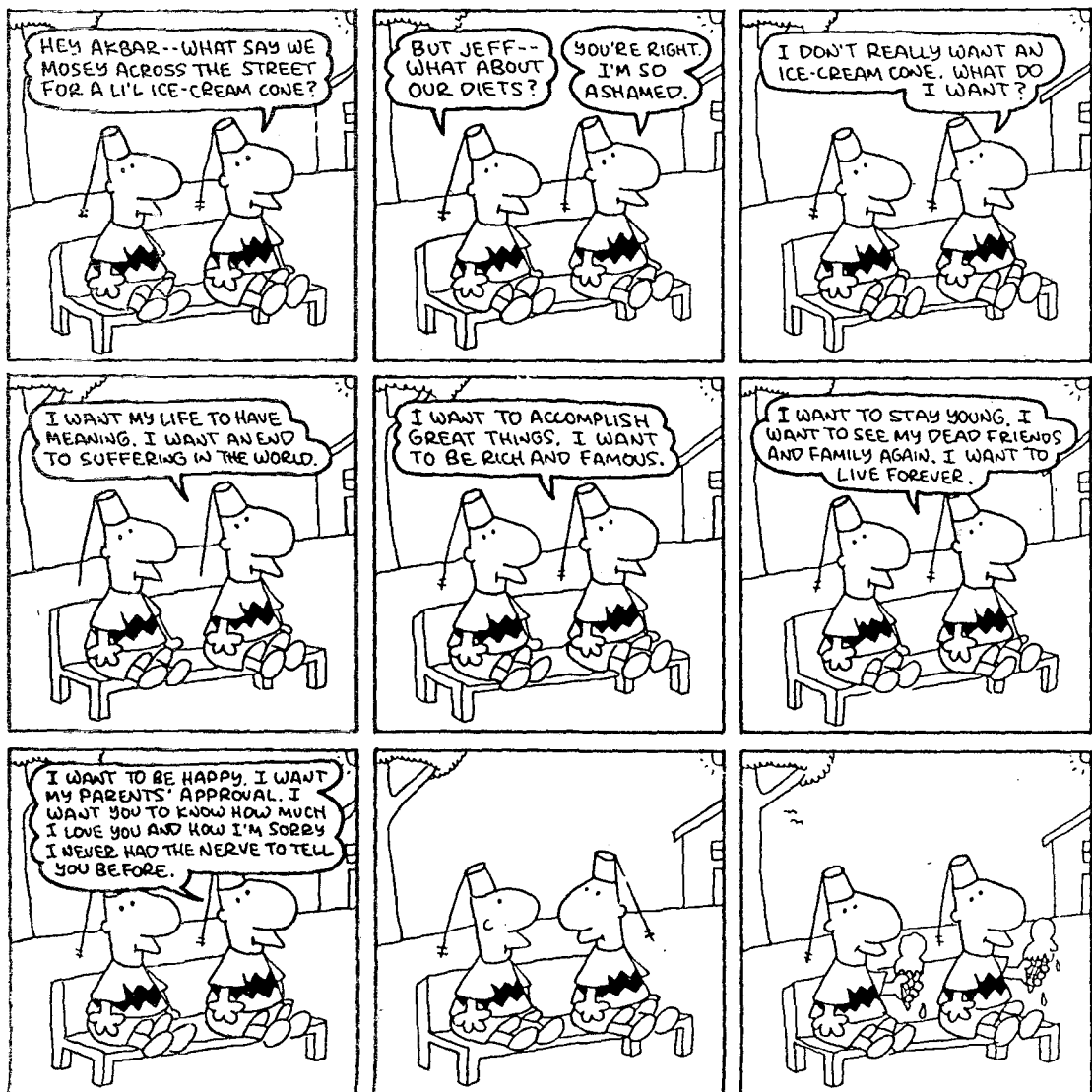
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By Beth Spence

MUCH OF THE MEDIA COVERAGE IN THE ongoing United Mine Workers-Pittston strike has focused on the struggle's frontlines: massive protests and civil disobedience in southwestern Virginia, mid-summer wildcat strikes spreading out from West Virginia to nine states. Behind the scenes other battles are being fought in isolated Appalachian hollows where mountain communities are being convulsed by the games of coal companies, some only indirectly connected with the strike.

Viewers of the movie *Matewan*, set in the '20s, would get an eerie sense of déjà vu in Logan County, W.Va., one of several Appalachian war zones. Belligerent mine guards, violent acts of provocation and evictions from coal company housing—all of these drive home the point that, in the coalfields at least, the more things change, the more they stay the same. The story of the residents of Ethel Hollow, one small coal community, summarizes more clearly than a volume of analysis, a colonial system in which coal is king and people are expendable.

Life of Craddock: In 1918, when he was 17 years old, Orville Craddock went to work as a carpenter for a coal company, building the four-room company houses that still are part of the landscape of Logan County in southern West Virginia. Now 88, Craddock can remember the days when Ethel Hollow's two tipples roared, and companies needed hard-bodied men to wrest coal from the earth with picks and shovels. Today's mechanized coal industry, however, no longer needs the company towns or most of the miners who once dug the coal.

Of the 200 houses that once lined Ethel Hollow, only nine remain. And those who live there—including Orville Craddock—have been told to be out by Thanksgiving. Nineteen other families must move their mobile homes out of the hollow.

Ethel Hollow is owned by Dingess Rum Coal Company, which despite its name, does not mine coal. Dingess Rum is a land-holding corporation whose primary business is leasing its approximately 30,000 Logan County acres to mining companies.

Renting the houses left by coal companies of an earlier era is only a side business. Families living in Dingess Rum houses have leases that stipulate they must vacate the houses within 30 days if necessary for the "mining of or moving of coal."

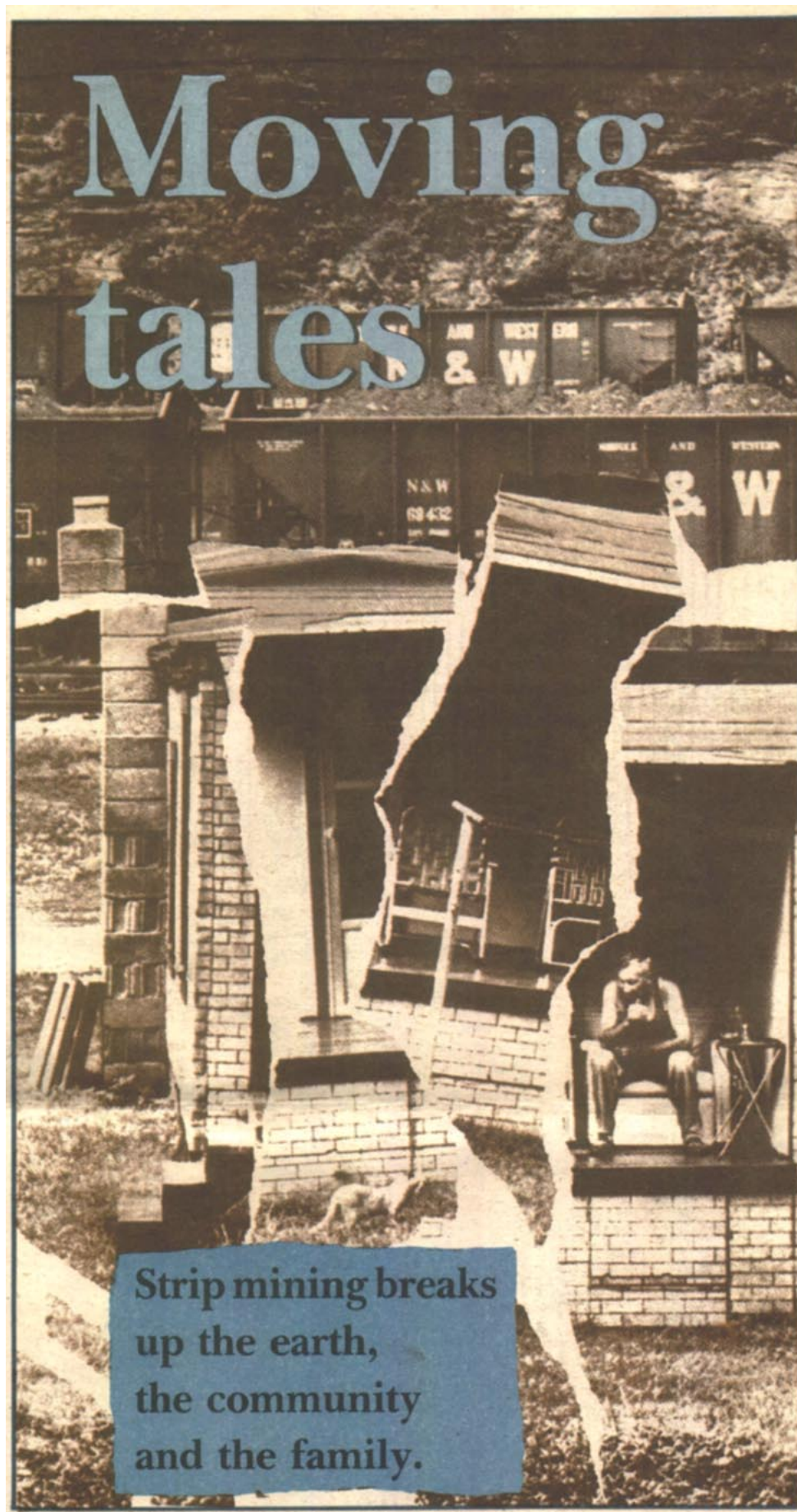
This would be less heartless if other housing were available in Logan County. But corporate policies of destroying houses, coupled with the fact that much of the land in southern West Virginia is owned by large absentee landowners, has meant a growing housing shortage. With no new moderate-income housing being built, the decision by a company to tear down houses means that many families literally have no place to go.

Dingess Rum has leased Ethel Hollow to the non-union A.T. Massey Company. Massey reportedly will strip mine the hollow, which has been home to Orville Craddock since 1916 when his family packed a wagon and left their hillside farm.

The only option Dingess Rum gave Craddock is that he can buy a trailer and move onto a trailer park where the company is relocating families already living in mobile homes. The offer does little to console Craddock.

"This is my home, and this is where I want to live," he says sadly. "I've lived here for 74 years, and I've always paid my rent, but I don't know if I'll have much say. The people that's got the money make the decisions."

One of Craddock's 10 surviving children, Juanita Bunch, who lives next door, is afraid the eviction notice is a death sentence for her father,



who has lived alone since the death of his wife.

"Dad's not going to make it to moving day," says Bunch. "He's grieving to death. The land company is killing him little by little."

News of the eviction is also hurting Bunch, who grew up in Ethel Hollow and who has lived in the house next to her father for 26 years.

"I look out after Dad," she says. "He doesn't drive. My husband takes him to church, Sunday school, to the store or to get a haircut. I cook for him and do his laundry. If he has to move away from us, we can't look after him."

"I have one sister that lives right over there and two more sisters on up the road," she says. "There's no way we can ever be as close as we are right now."

Bunch's husband, Bob, a jovial man with a long, full white beard, is aware of the strain on his wife, which he tries to alleviate with humor. But he is finding it increasingly difficult to be upbeat.

"You laugh to keep from crying," he says. "It breaks my heart to have to move."

The Bunches have practically rebuilt their home at their own expense, converting a cheaply-built company house into an attractive, permanent residence. The yard is filled with

flowers, which Mrs. Bunch has nurtured through the years.

"I haven't really done much with them this year," she says. "I've just let them go. I just don't have the heart since we got the notice."

Like his wife, Bob Bunch grew up in the Ethel area and can remember a time when people were a necessary part of the coal industry—and no one complained that they lived near the mines.

"There used to be all those houses up the hollow and the two tipples," he said. "The mines were running, and no one ever heard any complaints about us living there. Now they say they're going to mine and people have to get out."

Insult to injury: A staunch union man, Bunch is even more incensed that he is being evicted so that a non-union operation can destroy his home. "I don't see how our government can let Dingess Rum lease to a non-union thing that tears people up," he says.

Historically, as its officials have ruthlessly moved people out of their homes and destroyed communities at the whim of coal operators, Dingess Rum has used the local press to try to

portray itself as a "good" neighbor.

Just last month in a story in the local *Logan Banner* headlined "Dingess Rum takes human approach," a company official was quoted as saying the relocation will put families in "a better situation."

Up the road about a mile, James Bryant isn't buying it.

"This is twice I've been put out by a coal company, and every time I have to pay out of my own pocket," says Bryant. "They say they'll help, but ain't nobody come to help me. 'You have to move out of the holler,' that's how it was put to me."

Bryant, who lives in a trailer, says he couldn't stand the confinement of a trailer park—he needs a little space around him for his hunting dogs and his chickens.

"I don't know right off where we're going, but I'll tell you one thing—I'm not going to that trailer park," he says emphatically.

Bryant's wife, Eva, said the trailer is the best home the family has had in the 25 years of her marriage. Like many families in southern West Virginia, they have struggled to find decent housing, and before moving into the trailer they have moved four times in six years. They are concerned about the effect of the constant upheaval on their sixth-grade daughter who has changed schools with each move.

The impact on families apparently does not concern Dingess Rum. The Ethel Hollow evictions are not the first time the company has moved people to expedite the flow of coal.

Dingess Rum takes: In 1975 more than 30 families were evicted from housing on nearby Rum Creek so the Pittston Company could build a \$15 million coal processing plant. Then, as now, Dingess Rum tried to portray itself as a benevolent company that looked out for the interests of the people.

"Dingess Rum takes care of you," one company executive told residents of Hutchinson at a community meeting, as if repeating the paternalistic motto would somehow create an environment of concern. The only thing Dingess Rum did at that time to help with relocation, according to one former Hutchinson resident, was send a representative of a mobile home company to families' doors, a move similar to Dingess Rum's current "human approach."

Asked to sell land to residents so they could build houses, a vice president explained the company position: "Dingess Rum will never sell land that has coal under it, and for our purposes, all our land has coal under it."

The concept was further explained by the late Rolla Campbell, one of the Huntington bankers who formed the company around the turn of the century and who was still in command when the Hutchinson community was destroyed. Level land in Logan County, according to Campbell, is needed not for housing families but for "roads, railroads, coal processing plants, refuse dumps, settling ponds and other needed facilities."

Juanita Bunch scoffs at Dingess Rum's latest attempt to paint itself as a caring corporation, concerned with the well-being of people who live in coal communities. She is shocked that the company can treat people—particularly those who helped build the coal industry—with such brutality.

"It's not only the community they've torn apart," she said. "My family's been torn apart. I don't know what we'll do."

And Orville Craddock, suffering from black lung disease after more than 50 years in the mines, is left to ponder an uncertain future.

"I don't know what I'll do," said the man who was present at the creation of the community, who built the houses and who cast his lot with the industry that has defined his life. "I just wish we didn't have to move."

Beth Spence is a writer living in West Virginia.